Thurmond / New River Gorge

Development Concept Plan / Interpretive Prospectus

National River / West Virginia

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Development Concept Plan / Interpretive Prospectus

September 1992

Thurmond

NEW RIVER GORGE

National River • West Virginia

United States Department of the Interior • National Park Service • Denver Service Center

SUMMARY

This *Development Concept Plan / Interpretive Prospectus* describes actions to be taken for resource preservation, interpretation, and economic revitalization in the town of Thurmond, West Virginia, a small community in the northern portion of New River Gorge National River. Thurmond has a significant history as one of the key railroad centers for shipping coal, freight, and passengers on the C&O Railroad during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Although the town has declined in recent decades, it retains much of its historic character and reflects the period of its prominence. It also possesses the only remaining major railroad resources within the national river. Compared to other areas in the park, the town has relatively easy automobile access from West Virginia Route 25, is still on the mainline of the C&O (now CSX) Railroad, and is served by Amtrak.

The 1982 *General Management Plan* for New River Gorge National River recommended that resource preservation and visitor use in Thurmond be limited to the depot, which would have housed a small visitor facility and museum describing railroading, commerce, coal mining, and local culture. Subsequent documentation of the historical integrity and significance of Thurmond, acquisition of important cultural resources in the commercial area of town, and strong public interest prompted the consideration of other alternatives. The National Park Service will preserve and interpret the town's resources, protect the scenic and historic integrity of the area, and provide leasing or other arrangements for the town's remaining commercial buildings. By encouraging visitation to the area, the cultural heritage of the region will provide economic opportunities to the town. In November 1989 the Park Service published and circulated a draft *Development Concept Plan/Interpretive Prospectus/Environmental Assessment*, which presented three alternatives for preserving and interpreting Thurmond:

A - limited interpretation of railroad history at the depot (the general management plan proposal)

B - historic period restoration and interpretation of the entire town

C - preservation of the town and interpretation of its evolution over time.

A fourth alternative (D), which would have involved emergency stabilization with no interpretation, was included in the document to describe the effects of taking no action in the town.

Following public and agency review of the draft document, the Park Service evaluated all review comments and selected alternative C as the plan for future preservation, use, and development of Thurmond. The plan proposes to preserve and interpret the town to illustrate its significance and its evolution as part of the regional railroad network from 1873 to the present day. Historic railyard buildings and settings will be used to explain the coal mining connection, the changes to the regional economy, and the effect of diesel trains on the railroad industry in New River Gorge and beyond. As part of the plan, historic buildings in the commercial area of Thurmond will be adaptively used through lease or concession arrangement for visitor services that will contribute to the preservation of the town.

The plan includes completing preservation treatments to protect all remaining structures in the railyard and commercial areas; installing protective fencing in the

railyard to ensure visitor safety; establishing interpretive programs and media to reflect identified themes and goals; improving the Thurmond-Minden hiking trail and developing a new trail to Cunard; improving the portion of Route 25 between Glen Jean and Stone Cliff (the Thurmond access road); and developing park operations support facilities and public use areas at Southside Junction across the river from Thurmond.

The National Park Service has selected a plan that illustrates the town's evolution over time because it will provide the widest range of options for resource protection and interpretation in the Thurmond area. Because the plan will not limit restoration and allowable uses to a narrow period of the town's history, more aspects of the New River Gorge railroading story and Thurmond's lively history can be told and a greater number of compatible activities can take place in and around the town. Many of the historic structures will be restored to the time of their most prominent use. This plan offers the best opportunity to preserve the community and develop Thurmond as a major destination within the national river.

CONTENTS

ILLUSTRATIONS

Background

PURPOSE OF AND NEED FOR THE PLAN

This *Development Concept Plan / Interpretive Prospectus* represents another step in the ongoing planning, management, and development of New River Gorge National River. The national river includes a portion of the New River and its narrow gorge in the Appalachian Mountains in southern West Virginia. The 50-mile-long, 62,000-acre national river corridor, which runs from the town of Hinton in the south to just north of the U.S. 19 bridge near Fayetteville, was created on November 10, 1978, by Public Law 95-625 "for the purpose of conserving and interpreting outstanding natural, scenic, and historic values and objects in and around the New River Gorge and preserving as a free-flowing stream an important segment of the New River in West Virginia for the benefit and enjoyment of present and future generations."

This document presents a plan for resource preservation, interpretation, and economic revitalization in the town of Thurmond, West Virginia, which lies in the northern portion of the national river (see Location map). Thurmond has a significant history as one of the key railroad centers for shipping "smokeless coal" on the C&O Railroad during the late 19th and 20th centuries. At the peak of activity in this remote community, as many as 200 railroaders worked in the offices, railyard, and engine repair house, and Thurmond produced millions of dollars in freight and revenue annually. Although the town declined as a railroad hub with the introduction of diesel technology, it retains much of its historic character and reflects the period of its prominence. In addition, Thurmond contains the only remaining major intact railroad resources within the national river; the railroad yard in the town still contains the depot, engine house, sidings, and most of the yard structures from the historic era. Together, these provide a unique opportunity to interpret a historic railroad community within the New River Gorge.

The 1982 *General Management Plan* (GMP) for the national river identified Thurmond as a "prime historical site" and recommended that it be nominated for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places. The Thurmond Historic District was placed on the register in January 1984 and listed at a level of state significance. The GMP proposed limited interpretation and use in the town. Subsequent documentation of the historical integrity and significance of Thurmond, acquisition of important cultural resources in the commercial area of town, and strong public interest prompted further action. The National Park Service will preserve and interpret the town's resources, protect the scenic and historic integrity of the area, and provide leasing or other arrangements for the town's remaining commercial buildings. By encouraging visitation, the cultural heritage of the region will provide economic opportunities to the town. A high priority for all proposed activities and uses in Thurmond is to maintain the character and historical setting of the town.

The Thurmond area today is a community of less than 50 residents, with no commercial services and limited economic opportunities. Such opportunities must be created if the vitality of the town is to be restored. If the historic commercial area of Thurmond is revitalized through NPS and private action, many other businesses and services will be possible in the town and surrounding areas, including hotel or bed-and-breakfast accommodations; restaurants and snack shops; retail sales; a general store; offices; privately sponsored programs, classes, and demonstrations;

nature and railroad photography; NPS programs and conferences; and activities related to railroadiana.

The Thurmond area is one of the few locations along the river in the northern portion of the park that has relatively easy automobile access. The town is on the east bank of the New River opposite where West Virginia Route 25 reaches the river. A one-lane road and a railroad bridge provide access to Thurmond from Southside Junction, a small development on the west bank.

From Southside Junction, Route 25 continues along the west bank of the river to Stone Cliff. In addition to its accessibility by car, Thurmond is on the mainline of the C&O Railroad (now the CSX Railroad) and Amtrak, and is one of the few places in the national river where people can get close to trains traveling through and stopping in the gorge.

A number of visitor activities take place near Thurmond. The area is one of the primary raft-launching sites on the New River. Most of the 23 companies that are licensed by the state to provide commercial watercraft services launch and take out in the Stone Cliff area. Both bank and boat fishing are good along this section of the river, and fishing boats launch and take out in the area. Picnic sites and primitive camping are available at Stone Cliff. A hiking trail has been established from near Thurmond to Minden, and the parkwide trail plan calls for additional trails, including one along the railroad grade from Southside Junction to Cunard, 8 miles to the north. Because activities and uses in the Thurmond vicinity are so interrelated, this *Development Concept Plan/Interpretive Prospectus* also includes actions for Southside Junction, the segment of Route 25 from Glen Jean to Thurmond and to Stone Cliff, and the trails from Thurmond to Minden and Cunard.

PLANNING OBJECTIVES

Objectives are:

Protect the historic resources in Thurmond and the natural resources and scenic integrity of nearby areas within the gorge so that the history of railroading and the transportation of coal in the New River Gorge can be interpreted to park visitors.

Provide opportunities to improve the economic viability of the town and surrounding area that will not adversely affect the integrity of the cultural landscape or significant resources.

PLANNING CONCERNS

Concerns are:

Providing for visitor access and circulation, and creating safe separation from railroad operations.

Determining the appropriate level of treatment and type of use for deteriorating historic buildings, bridges, and railroad yard features.

Allowing changes while minimizing intrusions on the physical character of the town and the viewshed.

Maintaining privacy and access for residents.

Providing opportunities for economic enhancement.

Deterring vandalism.

Providing adequate water and sewage treatment facilities.

This *Development Concept Plan / Interpretive Prospectus* was prepared after public and agency review of the draft

LOCATION

THURMOND

New River Gorge National River

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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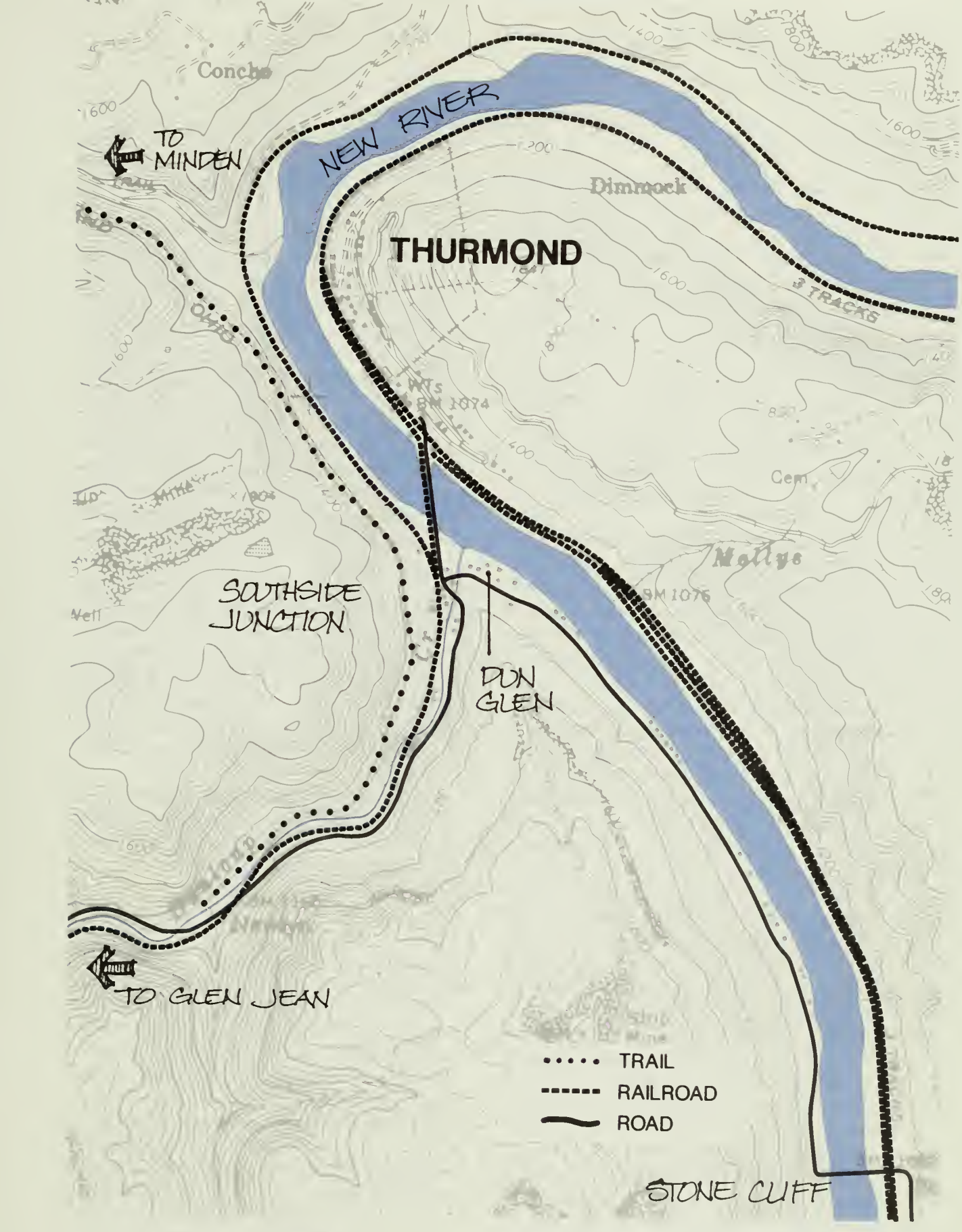
Development Concept Plan/Interpretive Prospectus/Environmental Assessment, which presented four possible alternatives for the preservation and interpretation of resources in the Thurmond area. After all comments on the draft document were considered, alternative C (the preferred alternative) was selected as the final plan (see public comment summary in appendix C). The final plan includes some refinements and additional details for implementation.



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STUDY AREA
THURMOND

New River Gorge National River

United States Department of the Interior / National Park Service

CULTURAL RESOURCES

According to the National Register of Historic Places, "Thurmond, West Virginia, is historically significant for its extraordinary commercial vitality in the early twentieth century in spite of extreme inaccessibility. For thirty-five years, Thurmond, located in the heart of the New River Gorge, was inaccessible except by railroad. Yet, as the chief railroad center on the Chesapeake and Ohio (C&O) Railroad serving portions of the fabled coal fields of southern West Virginia, Thurmond produced more tonnage and revenue than Cincinnati and Richmond combined. The town had not a single street, yet boasted two banks, two hotels and a thriving commercial block. Architecturally, the town is significant for its railroad architecture and for its vernacular worker housing and simple commercial buildings, not because they have great style or beauty, but for what they say about the thriving life in the West Virginia coal fields for some sixty years."

The following is a brief description of the history and resources of the town and surrounding areas.

HISTORY

The town of Thurmond, in Fayette County, was named for William Dabney Thurmond, who acquired the property in 1873, the year the C&0 Railroad completed its main line through the New River Gorge. A single house stood on the site when the railroad bridge was built in 1888-1889 just east of Thurmond's property, offering access to the opposite side of the New River. Development followed, including passenger and freight depots, an engine repair house, marshalling yards, water tanks and columns, and associated steam-era support structures. All available flat land in Thurmond was used for the railyard. Hotels, apartment houses, private homes, stores, offices, banks, and a restaurant were built on nearby slopes, and Thurmond soon became a thriving rail center. On the west side of the river, coal baron Thomas G. McKell built a 100-room resort hotel, the Dun Glen. Gambling, violence, and illicit sex flourished in the McKell saloons while the town of Thurmond itself remained "respectable" under William Thurmond's control. The population of the area reached more than 450 by 1930.

During the boom years of 1910 to 1930 Thurmond handled passenger traffic, but more importantly, shipped "smokeless" coal mined in the famous New River fields. This high-quality coal was a clean, hot-burning fuel with little sulphur and low ash. As a result, it was in high demand during America's age of steam. Coal and coke production was a major industry in Fayette County. As early as 1888 the county was producing over 1 million tons for shipment throughout the world. The presence of the C&O Railroad in the gorge promoted the establishment and growth of coal and lumber towns, all of which relied on the railroad for transportation and shipping access. The operations at Thurmond were the key to the railroad's success in the New River coal area. The town was in an advantageous position because it could be reached by bridge from the west side of the gorge; coal cars could be brought directly down Arbuckle and Dunloup creeks through Southside Junction and straight into town, where they could be attached to the C&O trains. By the turn of the century Thurmond was the main point where coal from the surrounding area was shipped out of the gorge. In 1904 it was fourth in total receipts on the railroad; in 1910 it produced nearly $5 million in freight and passenger

revenue. All movement in and out of Thurmond was by railroad; an automobile road did not reach the town until 1921. Even now there is no through street in Thurmond, and the railroad serves as "main street."

Thurmond's significance as a revenue producer declined in the 1930s because of mechanization, the depression, and other factors. This was accompanied by the closing of commercial services and the 1930 burning of the Dun Glen Hotel. Not until diesel replaced steam engines, however, did Thurmond completely lose its importance as a center of railroad activity. Since it was the world's largest hauler of coal, the C&O held onto steam longer than any other railroad. Finally, in 1949, the company ordered 146 diesel engines. When the last steam engine was retired in the New River Gorge, the era of steam power ended and coal mining as a major industry was all but over.

DESCRIPTION OF RESOURCES

Thurmond's physical setting was the largest determinant of its appearance and significance. The New River Gorge is a steep inaccessible valley cut by the New River, and Thurmond's C&O Railroad yards and commercial district were built on a narrow strip of land above the river. The placement of the marshalling yards, coal and sanding towers, water towers, engine house, and depots on the available flat land was dictated by efficiency and function. The commercial district logically developed near the depot to serve pedestrian traffic from the railroad. The residential section was built farther up the gorge hillside. Passengers arriving in Thurmond on the train walked a short distance to the commercial buildings, the hillside homes, and the magnificent Dun Glen Hotel on the opposite side of the river. Every service Thurmond had to offer was accessible by foot because of the town's physical layout.

As an industrial town, Thurmond's architecture was "built for practical commercial or residential use and lack[ed] embellishments or significant stylistic features" (NPS 1983). Only three or four housing types remain, adapted to the steep terrain. Thurmond's present-day appearance belies its past as a bustling community, but it has retained its scenic charm and historical integrity as one of the few existing New River Gorge towns.

The Thurmond Historic District contains 16 railroad, commercial, and residential structures with high historical integrity and significance. Another 29 structures and sites contribute to the historic district's character. The two structures at Southside Junction that are listed as intrusions in the district have, since the date of the designation, been removed by their owner.

The significant railroad structures include the passenger depot, the engine house, the coaling tower, the bridge, and two water tanks. The depot (1904) is a two-story rectangular wood frame structure that served passengers and later handled freight as well. In the engine house (1905 with a 1921 addition), a rectangular wooden building with two outshoot additions, locomotives underwent "light repair" and inspection. The reinforced concrete coaling tower (1922), together with a nearby sand drying and blowing house, serviced the engines with coal and sand. In 1888 and 1889 a triple-span iron truss railroad bridge with stone piers was built across the New River at Thurmond. It was strengthened in 1915, and the automobile lane was rebuilt in the 1980s. The steel water tanks (1914, 1927) were necessary for supplying water to the steam locomotives.

COAL MINE CONNECTION

New River Gorge National River

United States Department of the Interior / National Park Service

The significant commercial buildings are located next to the railroad tracks and are visually part of the railyard. These include:

The Mankin-Cox Building (1904), a three-story brick building that housed doctor's and pharmacist's offices and later the New River Banking and Trust Company,

The Goodman-Kincaid Building (1906), now in ruins except for four exterior walls of cut limestone, which once housed a restaurant, clothing stores, a doctor's office, and apartments,

The National Bank of Thurmond (1917), a four-story brick building that housed the bank founded by William Thurmond, the Western Union Telegraph Company offices, and living quarters.

Significant buildings and features of Thurmond that have been lost due to fire or demolition include the freight depot, railroad employee bunkhouse, two turntables, Lafayette Hotel, and the Armour meatpacking building.

Most of the residential structures in the town were built to house local railroad workers. They were built for practical use, without embellishments or significant stylistic features. As a result, they come in a few simple and often repeated stylistic forms. Other houses, initially built for railroad supervisory personnel, were sturdier in construction. Nine houses/buildings and their outbuildings have high historical integrity and are of prime significance to the historic district; an additional 22 houses and their outbuildings are contributing structures to the historic district that collectively assist in maintaining the historic significance of the town.

Except for foundations and railroad tracks, most of the historic features in Southside Junction have been lost.

NATURAL RESOURCES

Thurmond is on the east side of and approximately 50 feet above the New River in the center of a large meander. Southside Junction is directly across the river on the west side. The study area covers approximately seven acres on the west side of the river and five acres on the east side.

Vegetation

The vegetation on both sides of the river within and surrounding the town of Thurmond is a mixed mesophytic forest (Braun 1950) characterized by a relatively dense growth of trees and shrubs. The largest tree species are red and white oaks, basswood, sugar maple, sycamore, and hickory. Elm and sweet gum species are found at the river's edge, along with dogwood, witch hazel, and redbud. Jewel weed, poison ivy, stinging nettle, wild blackberry, and thimbleberry are the primary herbaceous flora.

Kudzu, an exotic species from Asia, has invaded many of the disturbed areas in New River Gorge. It is prevalent on the east side of the river, growing in and around the town of Thurmond. Royal polonia, another exotic species from Asia, was introduced to New River Gorge as packing material for glass and ceramics from the orient. It can be found in many disturbed locations in and around Thurmond.

Two federally listed endangered or threatened species occur in New River Gorge – running buffalo clover (*Trifolium stoloniferum*) and Virginia spirea (*Spirea virginianus*). One species found in the park – Steel's meadowrue (*Thalictrum steeleanum*) – is listed under category 2, which means that it is being considered as an addition to the federal list of threatened

and endangered species. None of these species are known to occur in the study area.

The state of West Virginia does not maintain a legally designated list of rare or endangered species; however, the state Department of Natural Resources does maintain a list of species of special concern. This list is maintained under the West Virginia natural heritage program. In addition to the species on the federal list and in category 2, the state recognizes two varieties of mountain bittercress: *Cardamine clematitis* and *Cardamine flagillifera* as rare plants. Both are endemic to the southern Appalachians and reach their northern limits in West Virginia. None of these species are known to occur in the study area.

Floodplains and Wetlands

The railroad tracks delineate the 100-year floodplain in the town of Thurmond. On the east side of the river, everything to the east of the westernmost tracks is outside the floodplain; everything to the west of the west track is inside the floodplain. Historic structures in the floodplain include the engine house and several railroad yard features. Most of these structures are, however, at the same elevation as buildings outside the floodplain.

On the west side of the river some of the visitor and operations facilities are inside the 100-year floodplain. The trail from Southside Junction to Cunard is at the floodplain elevation. Dun Glen is inside the floodplain, but many of the structures on the site were constructed by the former owner to withstand flooding.

There are no known wetlands within the study area.

Fisheries

The New River and its tributaries comprise the largest and most significant warm water fishery in the state of West Virginia. Most of the river, including the area around Thurmond, possesses good instream and riparian cover, which contributes to quality fish habitat. The New River supports and maintains game fish populations of largemouth bass, smallmouth bass, catfish, rock bass, muskellunge, walleye, crappie, sunfish, and spotted bass. The entire river is identified as existing or potential spawning grounds. A total of 58 species of fish have been identified in New River, with five considered endemic: big mouth chub, New River shiner, kanawha minnow, kanawha darter, and finescale saddle darter.

The West Virginia Department of Natural Resources stocks adult trout in six streams within New River Gorge. One of those streams, Dunloup Creek, is within the study area. This stocking program will continue.

Wildlife

Generally the forests support healthy populations of wildlife. In wooded habitats whitetailed deer, gray squirrels, fox squirrels, raccoons, opossums, skunks, foxes, and various small rodents are the most common mammals. Black bears have been sighted. Open lands support groundhogs, rabbits, and other common animals. Streamsides provide habitat for muskrats, mink, and beavers. Four endangered species may occur within New River Gorge: peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus*), Indiana bat (*Myotis sodalis*), Virginia big eared bat (*Plecotus townsendii virginianus*), and bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*). Three species are listed under category 2, which means that they are being reviewed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and considered as

additions to the federal list of threatened and endangered species: eastern small-footed bat (*Myotis subulatus leibii*), southeastern big eared bat (*Plecotus rafinesquei*), and wood rat (*Neotoma floridana magister)*. None of these species are known to occur in the study area; however, it is possible that some of the peregrine falcons that have been reintroduced into the gorge are feeding on the many pigeons nesting in the abandoned buildings and the railroad bridge.

VISITOR USE AND RECREATION

The majority of visitors who currently travel to the Thurmond/Southside Junction area arrive to raft the river with one of the rafting companies. Thurmond is visited by only a small percentage of visitors to New River Gorge, primarily people interested in railroads. Until the recent sales of the Banker's Club hotel/restaurant and the other commercial buildings on Thurmond's "main street," visitors came to Thurmond to stay overnight or enjoy a meal.

Fishing in Dunloup Creek and along the New River from Southside Junction to Stone Cliff is popular for local residents and visitors alike. Both bank and boat fishing occur in the study area; boat fishing occurs mostly north of the Thurmond bridge.

Public river access and new comfort facilities are currently available at Stone Cliff. Commercial outfitters launch rafting trips from Stone Cliff and from private properties between Southside Junction and Stone Cliff.

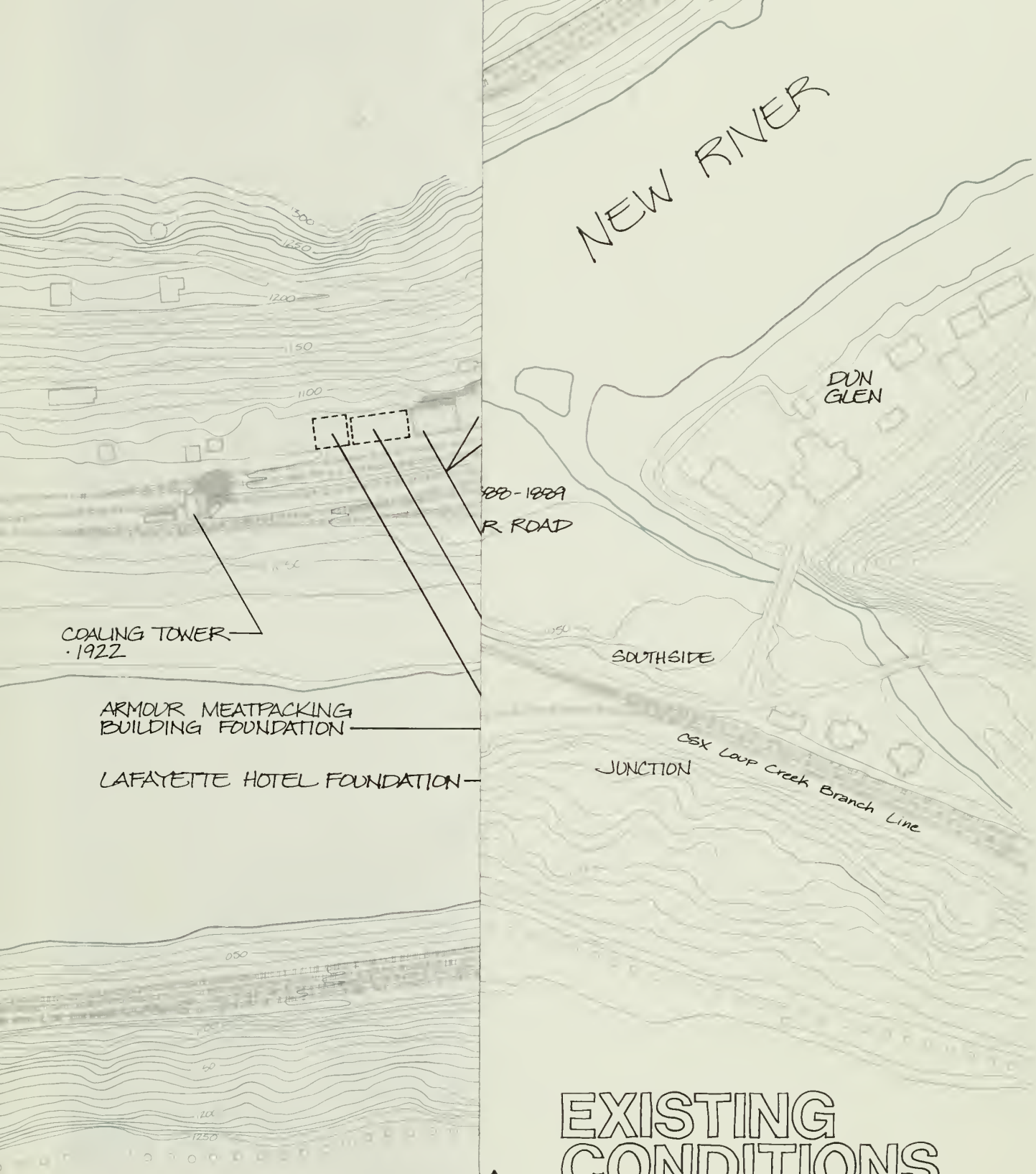
The Thurmond/Minden trail offers hiking opportunities for local residents and visitors. It is approximately 3 miles long and extends from the trailhead parking area off Route 25 just outside Southside Junction to the town of Minden. The town of Thurmond can be viewed from several places along this trail. The trail follows an old railroad spur that was used to haul coal in the early 1900s. Part of this section of trail has been designated as the Mary Ingles Trail by a local trail club of the same name. Near Arbuckle Creek the Mary Ingles Trail leaves the railroad grade and winds down a steep slope to the Cunard trail corridor along the river.

EXISTING DEVELOPMENT

Most new development has occurred along the river between Southside Junction and Stone Cliff. Structures there vary from modern buildings to older, small, seasonally used cabins, made primarily of natural materials. An area now designated as Dun Glen is the primary developed area along the road. It consists of eight major structures, two picnic shelters, parking areas, a boat-launching ramp, and utilities.

LANDOWNERSHIP

The Minden trail and trailhead parking are available for visitor use. Dun Glen (formerly known as the base camp site) has been acquired and is currently being used by the National Park Service for offices and housing. The CSX railroad depot, three commercial buildings, and two adjacent houses in Thurmond have been acquired by the Park Service, as have land parcels adjacent to the river and the railroad grade from Southside Junction to Cunard. Negotiations with the CSX Corporation are underway for the water tank, and engine house parcels and land in Thurmond.



EXISTING CONDITIONS

THURMOND

New River Gorge National River

United States Department of the Interior / National Park Service

NEW RIVER

CSX / Amtrak Main Line

PASSENGER DEPOT
·1904

POST OFFICE
·1929

WATER TANKS
·1914, 1927

ENGINE HOUSE
·1905
·1921 - WEST END ADDITION

COALING TOWER
·1922

COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS
·1904 - MANKIN-COX
·1906 - GOODMAN-KINCAID
·1917 - NATIONAL BANK OF THURMOND

ARMOUR MEATPACKING BUILDING FOUNDATION

LAFAYETTE HOTEL FOUNDATION

RAILROAD BRIDGE
·ORIGINALLY BUILT 1888-1889
·REBUILT 1915
·ONE LANE CANTILEVER ROAD

DUN GLEN

SOUTHSIDE

JUNCTION

C&SX Loop Creek Branch Line

Abandoned Southside Branch Line

THURMOND-MINDEN TRAIL

THURMOND AREA

NORTH

50 200

0 100 300 FEET

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EXISTING CONDITIONS

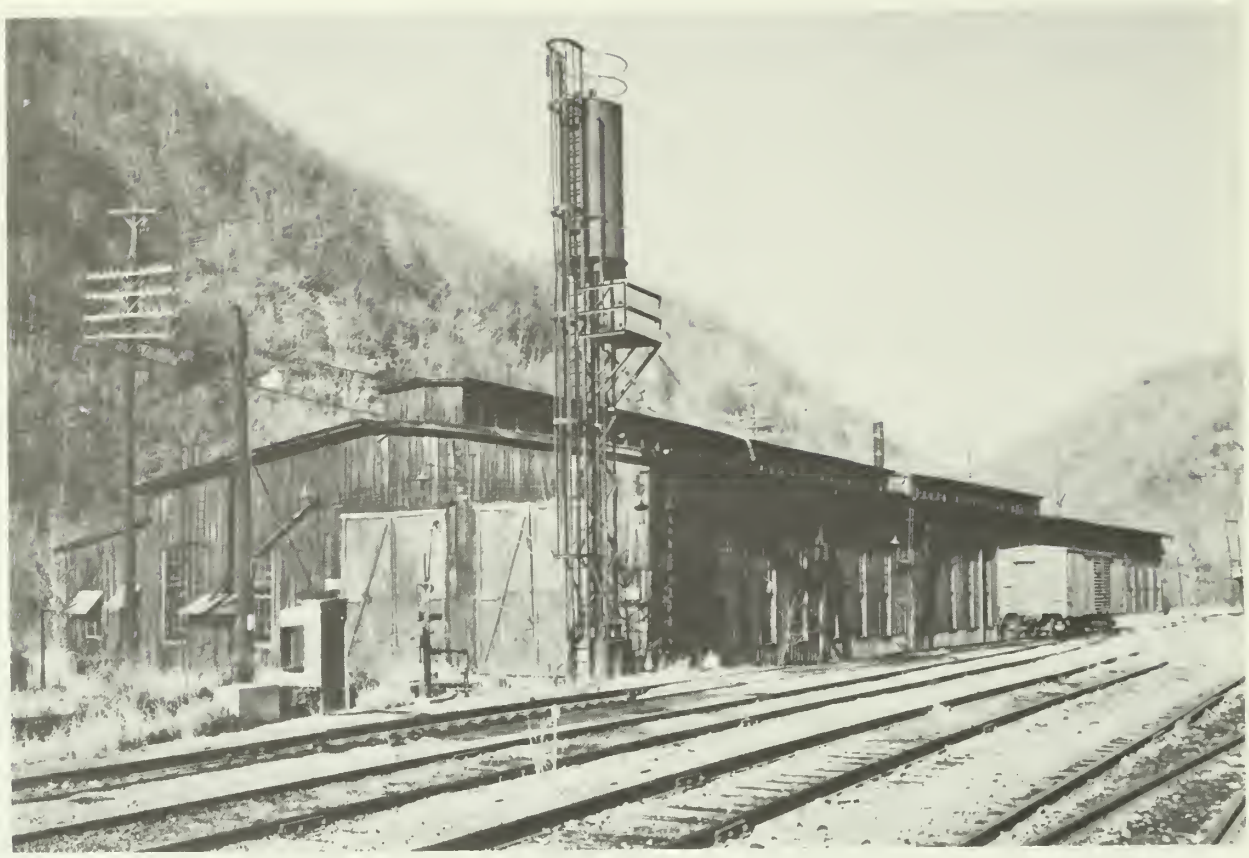
THURMOND

New River Gorge National River

United States Department of the Interior / National Park Service

Commercial buildings, coaling tower, and C&O mainline

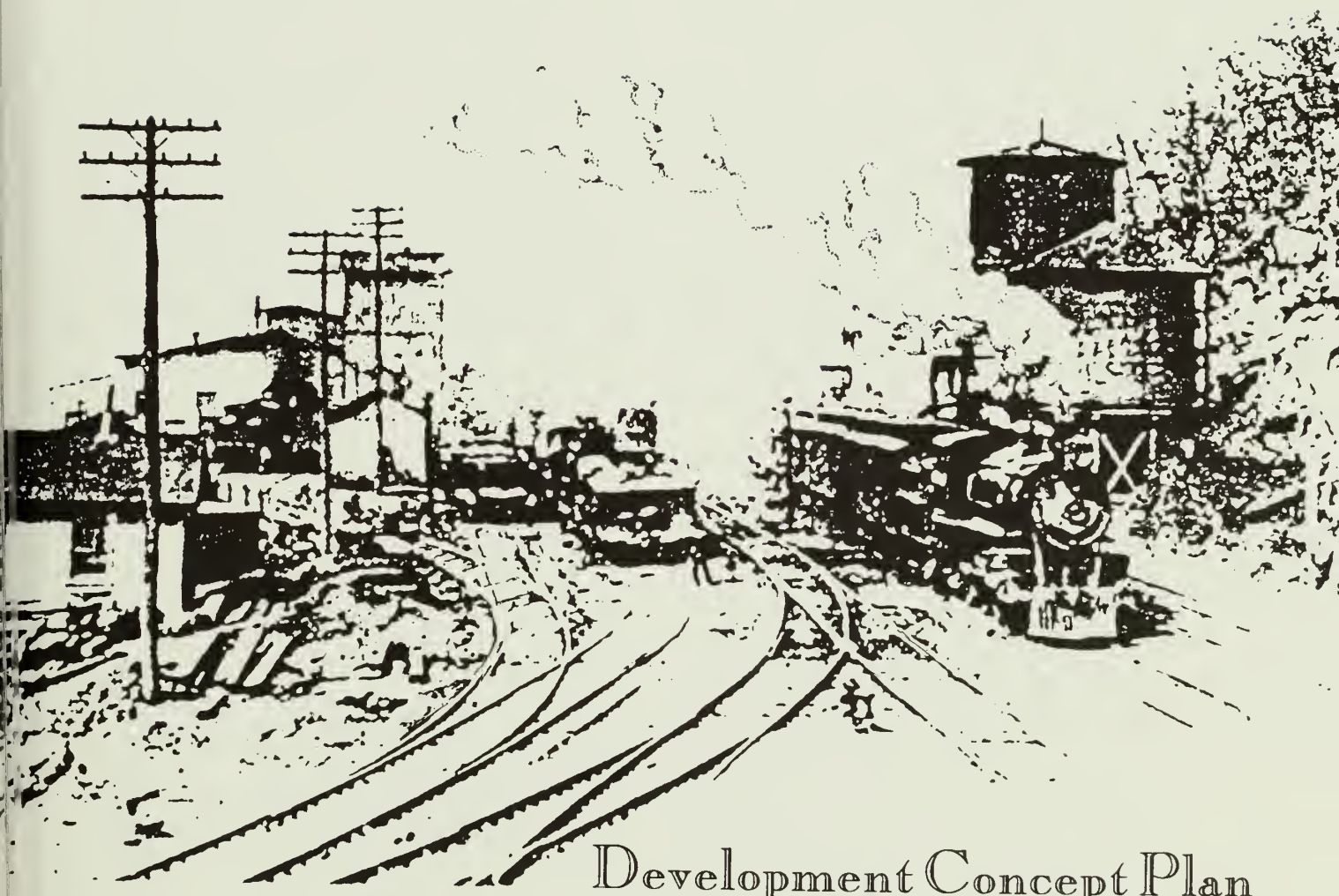
Water tanks, post office, and C&O mainline



Engine house

View from depot toward engine house and commercial buildings

Depot, bridge, and road crossing of C&O mainline



Development Concept Plan

Under the proposed plan Thurmond will be preserved and revitalized to illustrate its significance as part of the regional railroad network from 1873, when the C&O Railroad first completed its track in the New River Gorge, through the period when diesel replaced coal in powering engines, to the present day. The stories of the coal-mining connection, the changes to the regional economy, and the effect of diesel trains on the railroad industry will be told, which will place Thurmond in the larger context of the New River Gorge and the C&O Railroad. Preservation efforts will be instituted and activities introduced that will re-create the town's historical character and bring it back to life.

Most existing railroad buildings and yard features will be purchased by the National Park Service and preserved and adaptively used to interpret the significance of the town of Thurmond, Southside Junction, and the Dun Glen Hotel across the river, as well as the history of railroading in this region. Commercial buildings will also be preserved by the National Park Service, and these structures will be adapted for compatible uses under the historic building leasing program, a concession agreement, or direct NPS operation. Because the majority of the structures were constructed and were prominent in the early 1900s, their restoration will focus on that period. Other portions of the town and railyard will reflect the continuous use of the site. The longer time frame will allow for the exploration of the evolution of the town and for a wide range of compatible activities, including retail, commercial, and service operations.

Visitors will gain a broad view of Thurmond's history and experience a lively contemporary setting in the commercial area of town. After parking at Southside Junction and crossing the bridge on foot or in a shuttle, visitors will enter the depot and railyard area where the regional history and evolution of the railroad industry will be interpreted. Exhibits in the depot and the nearby engine house will describe railroad operations and the activities in Thurmond that supported them. The growth, success, and subsequent decline of the town, as well as its relationship to the outside world, will be conveyed through interpretation of both the missing and the remaining structures in the commercial area and through stories of what happened there.

Visitors will be able to see, hear, smell, and feel the activities of a busy railroad town. In the railyard, they will read the rails, see the grease and dirt, view old railroad cars and equipment, and participate in interpretive programs that will create a sense of the bustle when Thurmond was a railroad center. Contemporary commercial uses in adapted buildings will ensure preservation of the remaining elements of this unique railroad community and enliven the town.

Brochures and books will be available and waysides will be established on both sides of the river to interpret the history of the Dun Glen Hotel and Southside Junction and their relationship to the town. The Dun Glen area will also provide opportunities for picnicking, fishing, and environmental education, and trails will be maintained or developed to link the Thurmond area with other parts of the national river.

To broaden awareness of Thurmond and stimulate visitor interest, increased Amtrak passenger service and excursion trips through the gorge will be encouraged, with Thurmond as a destination point. As the historic town is preserved, developed, and revitalized, it is expected to become a major attraction within the national river.

One of the most important aspects of the town of Thurmond is its physical character, which includes the integrity of its remaining structures and its setting. Preservation of this character is critical to the story of the town's role in the regional railroad system. Because that system and Thurmond's role evolved over time, preservation efforts will not focus on a specific point in time. Rather, buildings and settings will be preserved and adapted to represent the entire history of the town's growth, commercial success, and eventual decline. As the only remaining intact railroad resource in the region, Thurmond offers a rare opportunity to preserve this small part of history and to expand visitor experiences in New River Gorge.

The majority of people arriving at Southside Junction will be park visitors who come to explore the town of Thurmond - some there for the day; others staying overnight at the proposed concession-operated hotel. Additional park visitors may leave their vehicles to hike the trails or to go fishing. Whitewater rafting enthusiasts may return to the area after rafting/kayaking the river. Additional access will be required for Amtrak travelers, service and emergency vehicles, and CSX employees. Local residents will continue to cross through the lower town. Access to the post office and for school buses will also be needed. With the creation of concession operations in the commercial buildings, concession employees and deliveries will require access.

To prevent the loss of significant resources, buildings in Thurmond that are deteriorated and unsafe will receive emergency stabilization to reestablish weather-resistant enclosures and structural stability. Any treatments of historic buildings beyond this emergency work will be guided by historic structure reports.

DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS AND CONSTRAINTS

The integrity of the town must be protected while revitalizing Thurmond. In order to provide access and a safe environment for visitors, new elements will be introduced. The effects of these new elements must be minimized to protect the historic integrity and character of the town.

Thurmond developed in an era before the advent of automobiles. Located in the steepest area of New River Gorge, the adjacent slopes rise between 25 and 80 percent. The only relatively level areas are sandbars, railroad cuts, and fills. Most houses were constructed on the slopes above Thurmond with the few commercial buildings and railroad structures built along the railroad tracks. Most existing roads and pedestrian pathways ascend grades of 10 percent or more, are less than 10 feet wide, and fall within the legal right-of-way of the active railroad line.

Design options are limited by steep slopes, narrow flat land, limited access to and through land along the river, remoteness from major highways and services, and lack of utility systems and locations for them. Constraints are also imposed by the objective of maintaining the character and existing quality of Thurmond's viewshed. Thurmond's character is defined by several factors, including the functional organization of buildings and railroad facilities, the lack of modern intrusions, the historic integrity of the structures and setting, CSX's continuing use of the mainline tracks, the pedestrian scale of the built environment, and Thurmond's historical and physical context within the New River Gorge.

The historic integrity of the railroad and commercial buildings and structures in

Thurmond is high. All are located on their original sites, many maintained their historic functions until recently, and all are examples of vernacular architecture. Each building's historic exterior character, integrity, and condition will be preserved to the extent possible when any new development, including safety features and utilities, is necessary in the historic district.

Physical Limitations

Thurmond and Southside Junction are on a bench level at the edge of the 100-year floodplain elevation above the New River. Steep hillsides on both sides of the river begin immediately adjacent to the minimal developable land at bench levels. These flat places in the gorge at the river were constructed over many years during the development of the railroad facilities at Thurmond and Southside Junction. Except for the commercial buildings, all of these areas are located on fill material.

Route 25 from Glen Jean was built where there was existing development, including railroad tracks, houses, fences, and retaining walls, plus Dunloup Creek. The intersection of the road with the bridge to Thurmond suffers from extreme elevation changes in a short distance.

Only a few handicapped parking spaces can fit near the depot, and no other vehicle parking can be accommodated on the Thurmond side of the river. Visitor parking, including additional handicapped parking and oversized vehicles, will have to be at Southside Junction. The main access to the town will be on foot or by seasonal shuttle. Drop-offs for hotel and Amtrak users may be possible. Service, emergency, and school bus access near the depot will be required.

The only access into the town of Thurmond is a one-lane vehicle/railroad bridge. It has a 12-ton load limit, a very narrow vehicle lane (12 feet), and no pedestrian walkway. Poor maintenance in recent years is evident in corrosion and deterioration of the bridge and piers.

The main railroad line for freight and Amtrak passenger service splits the lower town in half. A safe visitor area, plus crossings to each side of the tracks, will be needed. An active post office operates in the town. Amtrak passenger access will continue. Amtrak currently serves the area six times per week. CSX freight traffic varies, with a minimum 12-14 trains in a 24-hour period to several dozen during busier periods. Freight traffic on the Loup Creek line was estimated within the last year at 2-3 trains per month.

Access to commercial buildings for pedestrians and service vehicles is extremely limited. The railroad right-of-way and pedestrian areas overlap. Vehicular access to buildings is limited. Some components of new utility systems (water and sewer) will have to be within railroad rights-of-way.

Economic growth in Thurmond will have an impact on the character of the town. An acceptable level of change under the plan will be the minimal change necessary for safety and access. The amount of impact will be controlled, so that Thurmond's significant qualities will not be compromised. Resources will be made available for commercial use, but with precautions to minimize impacts on the town. Contemporary automobiles will be distracting at best. These and other potentially intrusive elements, including parking facilities, new utilities, new buildings, and nonhistoric uses of historic structures will be carefully controlled. The National Park Service will work closely with local residents in developing water and sewer systems.

New development needed to support activities in the Thurmond Historic District and surrounding area will occur on the Southside Junction/Dun Glen side of the river. Except for the railroad bridge and the foundations and some brick walls of the Dun Glen Hotel, the west side of the river retains only fragments of any historic elements; therefore, new development could be placed here without adversely affecting the district. This site will also provide an appropriate transition area for entry into historic Thurmond. Existing facilities at Dun Glen will be used for park operations, picnicking, fishing, and similar day-use activities.

Handicapped access will be included in the design and development of all new facilities.

Negotiations with CSX and private land owners will continue in order to acquire appropriate lands for development needs. Negotiations will also continue with CSX regarding easements, rights-of-way, liability concerns, and other activities at the site.

New water and sewer systems are needed for NPS developments at Thurmond. An adequate land base and easements for distribution systems are necessary for the systems to operate. Land in fee ownership and easements must be acquired prior to construction of these systems.

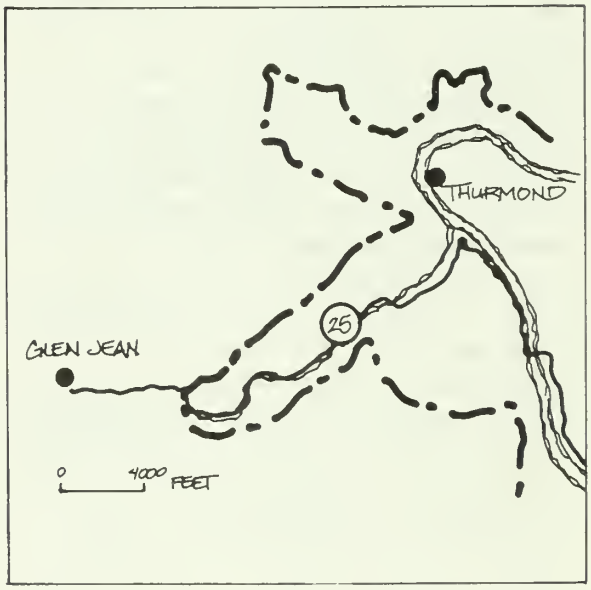
From the beginning of planning for Thurmond it was evident that physical conditions would make new construction difficult. The reason the integrity of the town still exists is because its physical limitations have not encouraged modern developments. New standards for development will not fit into an early 1900s town. In developing Thurmond, visitor facilities must be provided that are in conformance with minimally acceptable design standards and meet safety requirements.

THURMOND — THE PLAN

The following actions are planned to preserve, develop, and provide for visitor use of Thurmond's historic and natural resources.

Improvement of Route 25

West Virginia Route 25 was identified in the GMP as a visual corridor of special concern that should be protected. The existing road is not designed to accommodate the type and number of vehicles that are anticipated to travel to Thurmond.



A wide variety of user groups can be expected to use the road, including automobiles, light and medium trucks, RVs, buses, and emergency vehicles. The existing road encroaches on residential buildings, has severe curves with limited sight distances, crosses railroad grades, and retains narrow, aging bridges. Its width does not allow two full-size vehicles to pass each other and remain on the pavement at the posted speed limit. A minimal standard road (11-foot travel lanes with 3-foot shoulders) at 35 mph design

speed will not fit within the existing roadway.

Widening of the road and replacement of bridges will be required to accommodate RV's and buses. This will affect adjacent lands. Contingencies for narrow areas will include new road structures and signs. The challenge of road modification will be to retain the parklike character of the road, which skirts between creek, railroad, and cliffs under a canopy of dense forest. Cooperative efforts will be agreed upon by the state and the National Park Service for maintenance of this road.

Depending on congestion and availability of land for staging and parking in Glen Jean, a shuttle system may be instituted to take visitors to Thurmond.

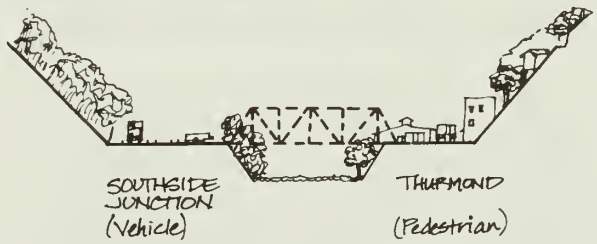
Southside Junction Staging Area

The narrow, one-lane highway bridge into Thurmond and the limited space in Thurmond require parking to be located on the west side of the river. Southside Junction will be the staging area for access into Thurmond.

A new access road will be constructed into the parking area. The road will make a grade crossing over the Dunloup branch of the railroad and take vehicles into the widest portion of the area.

Realignment of the intersection at Southside Junction to the new parking area will be needed for safe access due to the difference in elevation between the existing bridges crossing Dunloup Creek and the railroad tracks/New River Bridge. Road realignment for safety purposes will take priority over river access for use of NPS-owned land at this location.

Parking for 150 cars, a comfort station and shelter, shuttlebus pickup, and turnaround points will be constructed on the railroad grade in the former railroad car storage area, as proposed in the GMP. Parking for oversize vehicles and necessary turning areas may require cutting into the slope or widening the bench level. Because of its narrow width, all existing tracks and ties will have to be removed to accommodate this new use.



The area that accommodated four railroad tracks at 13 to 14 feet center-to-center (52 to 60 feet wide) provides for a very tight double row of parking for approximately 1900 feet. Because this width continues for several thousand more feet, it may be more appropriate to construct a single-row parking area. Approximate walking time from the far end of the double row parking, across the bridge, and to the depot is about 11 minutes. Additional walking time would be needed for a longer parking area. The far end of the parking area will also be for trailhead parking for the trail to Cunard. If possible, railroad features such as switches and signals remaining on-site, will be used as exhibits.

Fences or other physical barriers may be placed on the edge of the bench level to protect visitors from the steep drop to the river. A sidewalk/boardwalk will connect the parking area to the west end of the railroad bridge. If a walkway cannot be incorporated onto the existing railroad bridge, a new pedestrian bridge will be required. This may require a modification of the parking area design.

Shuttle service will be instituted from the parking area during the busy season.

The bridge crossing will provide a transition into a different place and will be an important part of the visitor experience. Traffic signals and other control devices will be needed at both ends of the bridge.

CSX Railroad Bridge

There is no safe or legal pedestrian access across the existing railroad/vehicle bridge.

An agreement between the National Park Service and CSX Railroad for use and maintenance of the bridge and construction of a new walkway will be needed; other methods of using the bridge for pedestrians will also be considered, if feasible. There are two options for pedestrian access and use of the railroad bridge. First, with the cooperation and agreement of the CSX railroad and the West Virginia Department of Highways, a pedestrian walkway could be appended onto the existing railroad bridge after bridge and pier inspection, including underwater conditions. The condition of the bottom flange of the girders will determine the validity of altering the structure to add a cantilevered pedestrian bridge on the downstream side of the bridge. The second option would require construction of a new pedestrian bridge.

If conditions of the bridge warrant and agreements can be reached, visitors will walk or be shuttled (seasonally) across the bridge. The only viable way for the Park Service to provide pedestrian access to Thurmond, except by constructing a new pedestrian bridge, will be through the cooperation of the CSX Railroad and the West Virginia Department of Highways.

The bridge from Southside to Thurmond is the most critical link to the development planned for Thurmond. Without this cooperation, proposed development and revitalization of the town and surrounding area may be impossible.

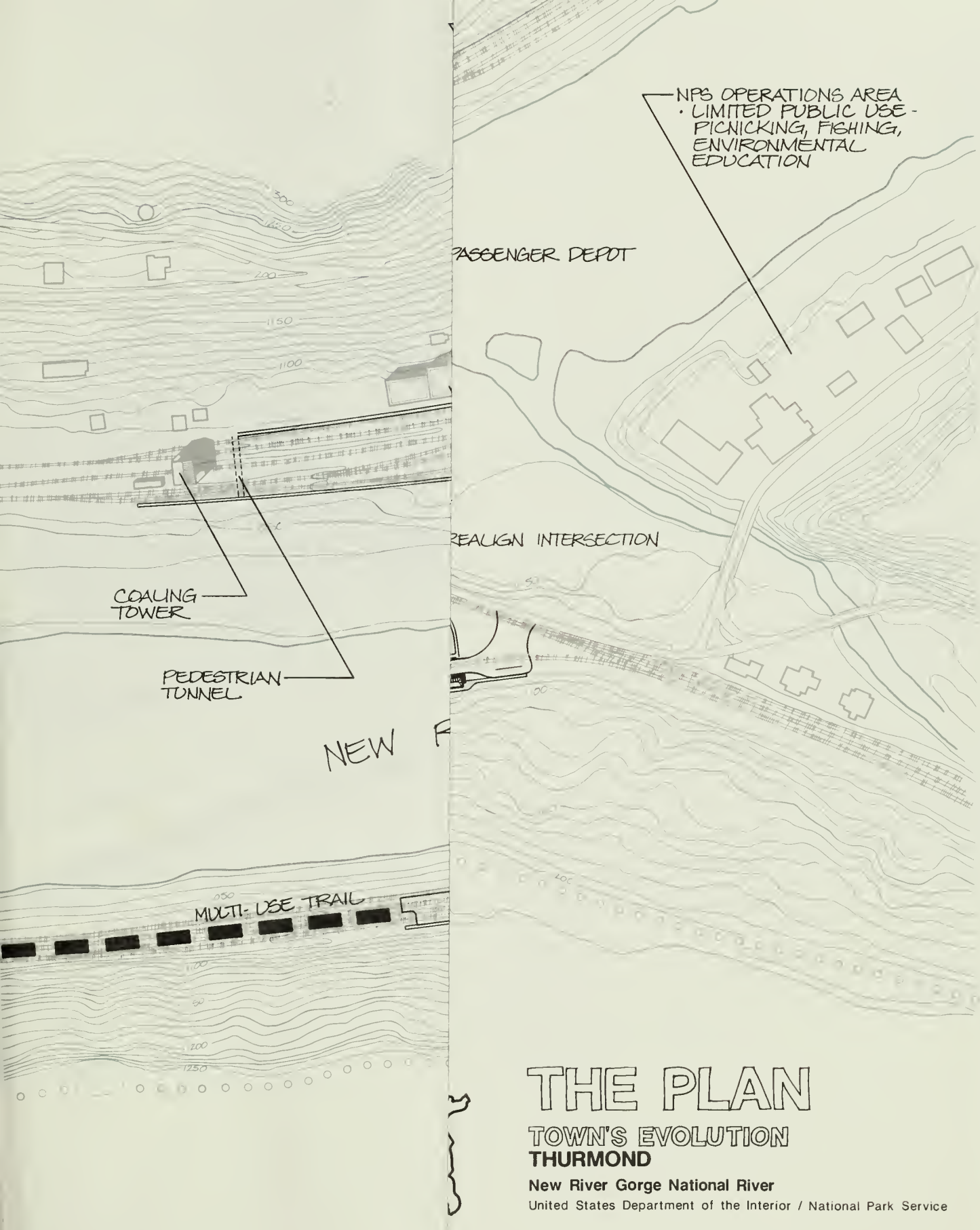
Depot Area

The depot will be the primary focal point for entering visitors. It will be preserved, partially restored, and adapted to provide interpretation of the passenger/traveler aspects of the story. Yard and train activities related to the depot will also be interpreted. Exhibits, possibly historic furnishings in one or more rooms, and cooperating association sales will be housed in the depot. Restrooms and a place for book sales will be provided. The passenger depot will continue to be a stop for Amtrak, and a waiting room will be developed in the building. Missing exterior elements such as a stairway and platforms will be replaced.

Major reconstruction of the retaining wall between the depot and the river and next to the bridge will be necessary due to fire and structural failure. The CSX Railroad will continue to have vehicle access through the parking area to their relocated offices. Interim utility needs will be accommodated.

Handicapped parking and a shuttle dropoff point will be established at the depot. The railroad bridge has a 12-ton load limit and the 12-foot roadway width will restrict large vehicles. School buses will continue to pick up and deliver students near the depot.

A pedestrian crossing will be designated at the road right-of-way from the depot area to the water tank area. Pedestrians have crossed at this point in the past.



THE PLAN

TOWN'S EVOLUTION
THURMOND

New River Gorge National River

United States Department of the Interior / National Park Service

PRESERVE WATER TANKS AND POST OFFICE BUILDING

NPS OPERATIONS AREA
· LIMITED PUBLIC USE - PICNICKING, FISHING, ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

PRESERVE PASSENGER DEPOT
· EXHIBITS

CSX RAILROAD ACCESS

BRIDGE
· PEDESTRIAN / SHUTTLE (SEPARATE)
· LOCAL TRAFFIC ONLY

PEDESTRIAN ACCESS

PRESERVE ENGINE HOUSE AND YARD STRUCTURES
· LARGE EXHIBITS

REALIGN INTERSECTION

COALING TOWER

PRESERVE COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS
· HOTEL / RESTAURANT / RETAIL

PARKING
· 150 SPACES
· SHUTTLE PICK-UP
· SHELTER / COMFORT STATION
· TRAILHEAD
· WAYSIDES
· OVERSIZE VEHICLE PARKING

PEDESTRIAN TUNNEL

NEW RIVER

MULTI-USE TRAIL

THURMOND - MINDEN TRAIL

THURMOND AREA

NORTH

50 0 100 200 300 FEET

637 | 40045A
DEC | JUNE 92
SHEET 1

THE PLAN

TOWN'S EVOLUTION

THURMOND

New River Gorge National River

United States Department of the Interior / National Park Service

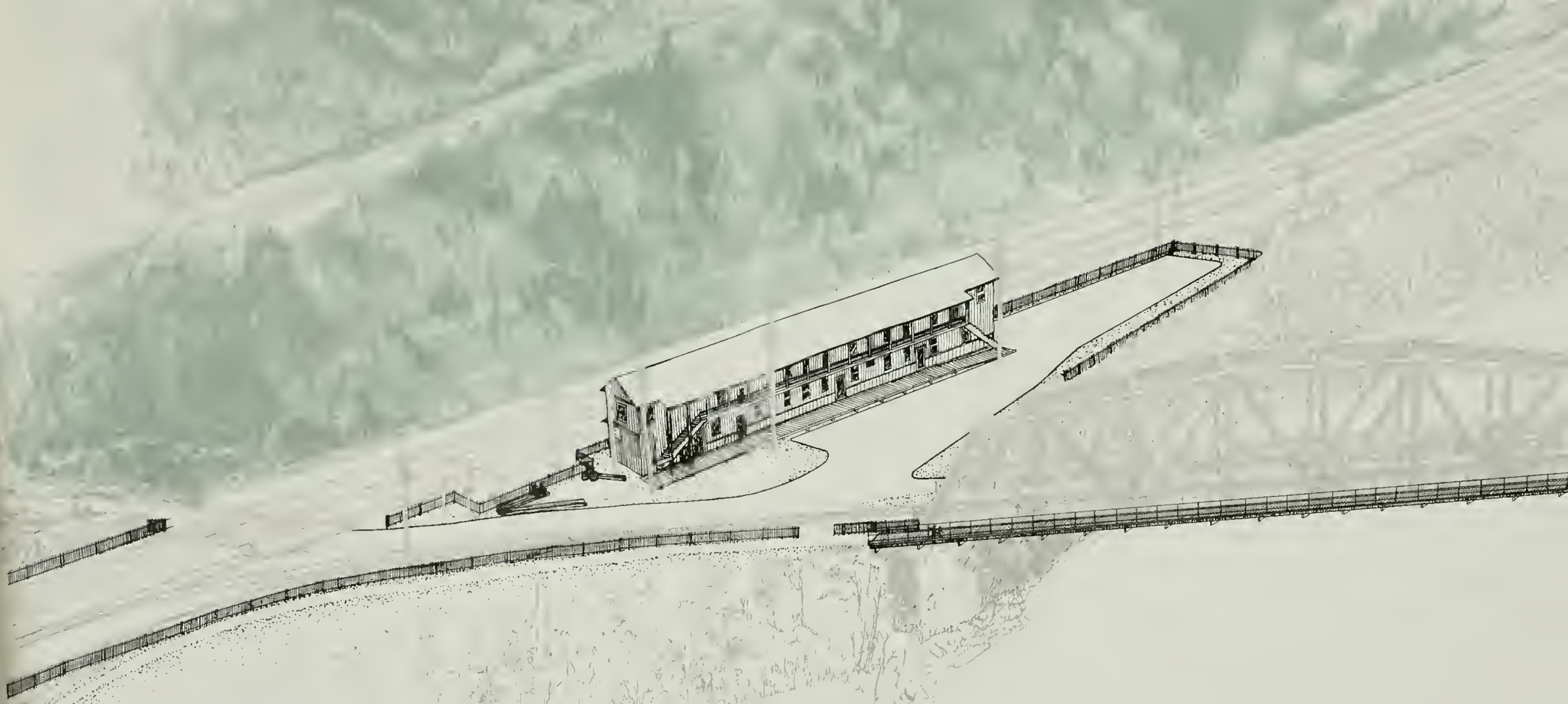
THE PLAN

TOWN'S EVOLUTION

THURMOND DEPOT

New River Gorge National River

United States Department of the Interior / National Park Service



THE PLAN

TOWN'S EVOLUTION

THURMOND DEPOT

New River Gorge National River

United States Department of the Interior / National Park Service

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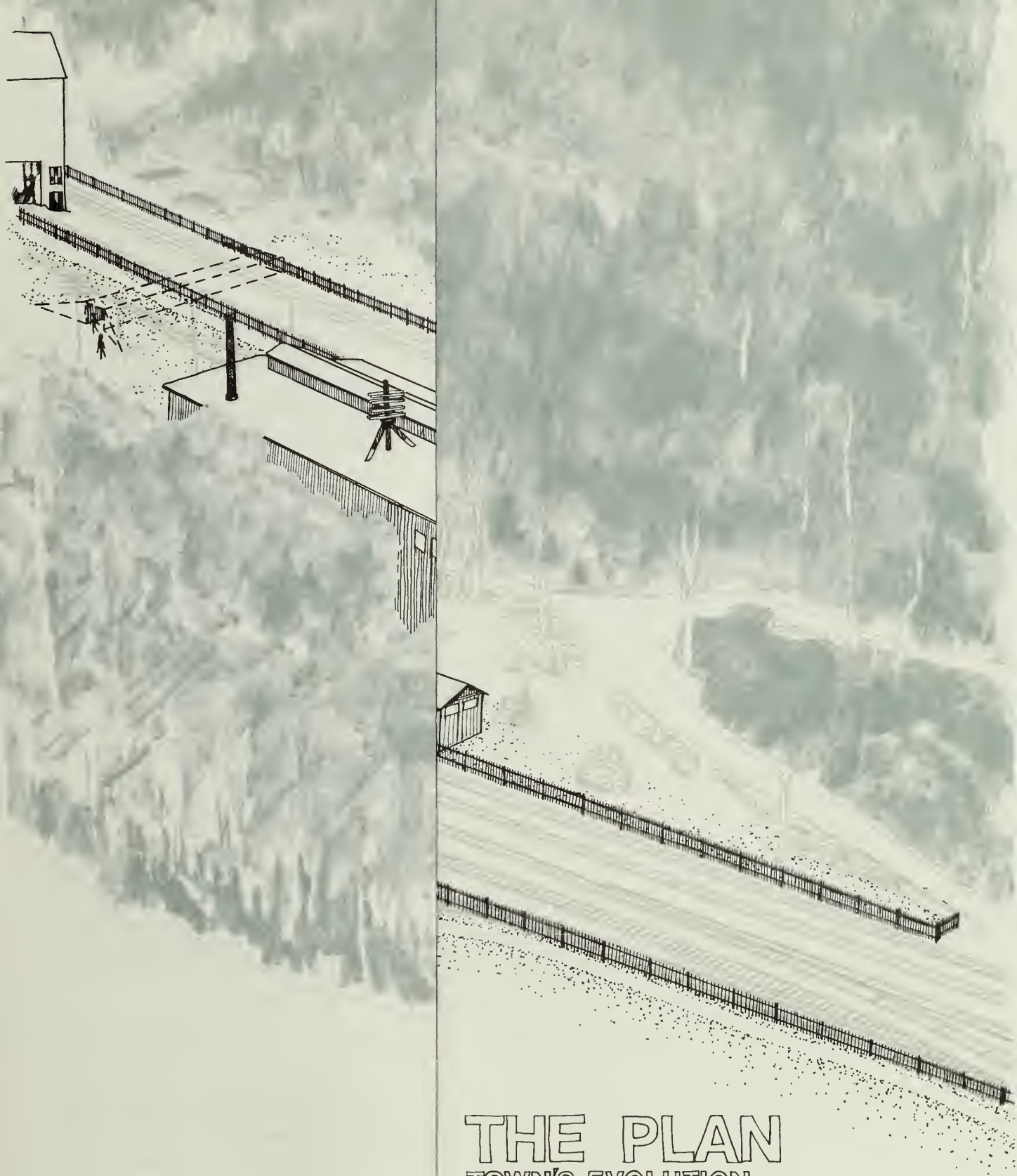
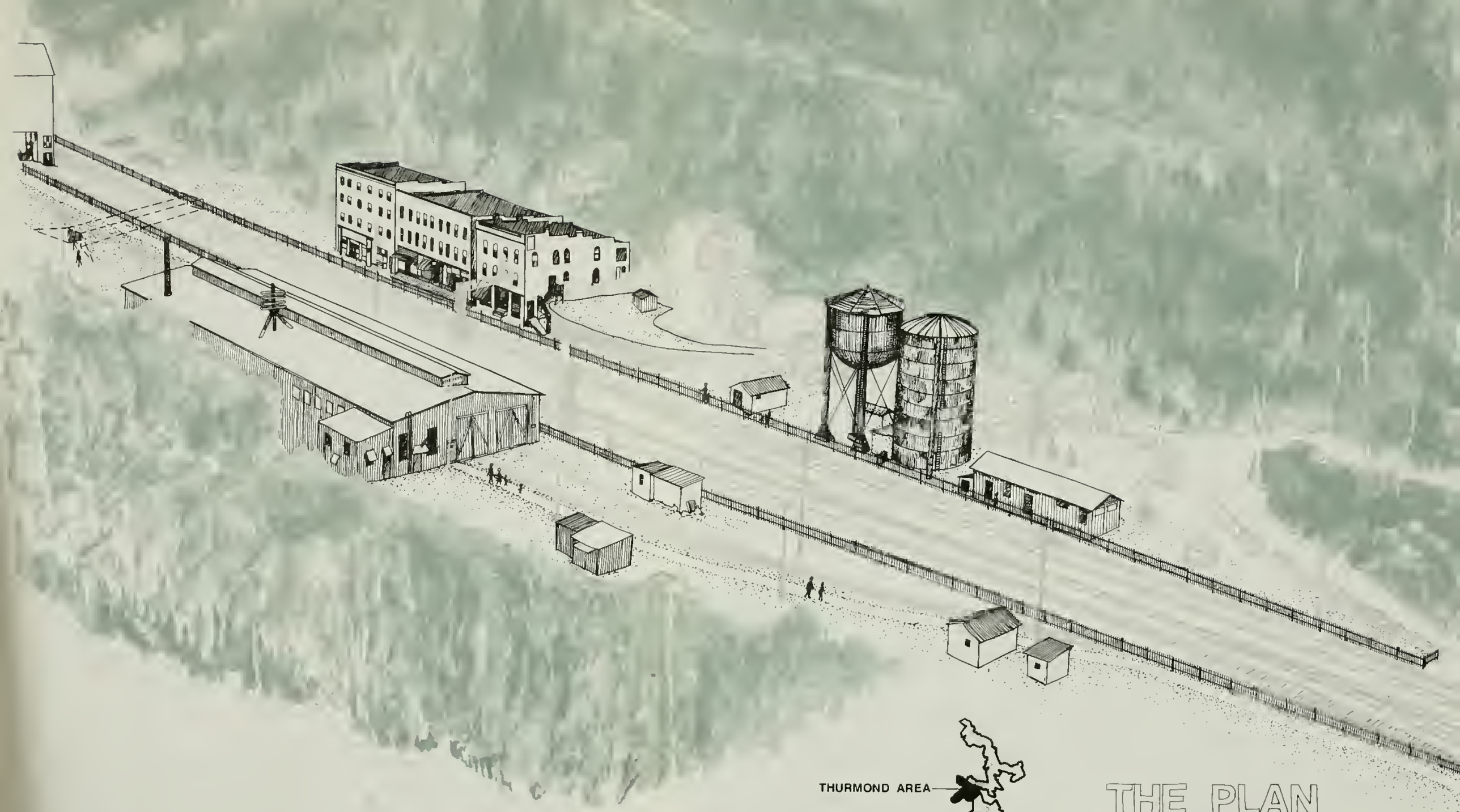


THE PLAN
TOWN'S EVOLUTION

THURMOND RAILYARD
AND COMMERCIAL AREA

New River Gorge National River

United States Department of the Interior / National Park Service



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SHEET 2

THE PLAN
TOWN'S EVOLUTION

THURMOND RAILYARD AND COMMERCIAL AREA
New River Gorge National River
United States Department of the Interior / National Park Service

Water Tank Area

The two water tanks will be cleaned, inspected, and repainted, and their use for fire protection will be evaluated. They are partially located in the railroad right-of-way. Fee acquisition or easement for these structures and for pedestrian use in this area will be needed.

The existing private access road behind the water tanks is one lane and has grades in excess of 10 per cent. Improvements to this road will be needed. A service road would be required for hotel and retail service vehicles, guest access, emergency vehicles, and CSX vehicles.

Because the post office building contributes to the historic scene, it will be protected as much as possible during development activities. If pedestrian access to the building continues, its function may continue at its current location. If not, the post office will be relocated.

Pedestrian access from the depot and railyard to the commercial area of town will be by way of the existing vehicle crossing and road near the depot and by a fenced pedestrian access along the tracks or behind the water tanks. In addition, a pedestrian tunnel will be constructed beneath the Thurmond railroad tracks from the area of the engine house to the commercial buildings; this tunnel will provide a safe crossing and direct access from the railyard to the commercial area.

Engine House Area

The engine house will be used to house large exhibits, like railroad cars, engines, or other items. The main interpretive focus will be the operation of the railroad. All aspects of operations, including employee functions, the interaction of activities, repairs, and marshalling, will be illustrated in and around the engine house. Both steam and diesel era activities will be interpreted. A working scale model of the Thurmond railyard will be displayed in the engine house to demonstrate the marshalling of engines and coal cars. It will show the arrival of coal cars from various mines in the gorge and follow their connection to the trains that took them outside the gorge. An exhibit explaining the significance and magnitude of coal exportation from Thurmond on the C&O railroad will be in this area. The general foreman's office, "bullpen," and tool rooms might be rehabilitated for use as exhibits on steam and diesel operations, the life of engine house employees, and operations in the engine house and east yard areas. Orientation brochures and signs will be used to guide visitors through the interior expanse of the building. Restrooms will be provided.

The National Park Service will work with the CSX Railroad to save the engine house because it is a key feature of the town. The objective is to restore and preserve the building. Hazardous material conditions will be mitigated prior to building rehabilitation.

Due to its deteriorated condition and existence of hazardous materials, most of the historic building fabric will not be salvageable. During building preservation work, as much original fabric as practicable will be retained. New materials of similar appearance will replace the old in order to retain the building's (and town's) physical appearance. Interior configuration of rooms and spaces will remain as historically used, but will be adapted for interpretation. Some minor modifications will be needed to accommodate new uses and sprinkler, alarm, and utility systems. Because of the size of the structure, portions may not be kept at optimum heating and cooling temperatures all year.

Fee acquisition or easements will be needed for pedestrian and service vehicle access across the Dunloup branch line and road and around the northwest corner of the engine house.

The estimated width of area at track level north of the engine house available for NPS uses ranges from 8 feet to the width of the building. This narrow area will not allow for any long-term vehicle use. Placement of approach ramps to the pedestrian tunnel will occupy some of this area. A sewage treatment facility at this location may be possible, but other locations may be more suitable.

Railyard

Visitors will be encouraged to walk in a large area of the railroad yard. A fence will be added to keep pedestrians off of the mainline railroad tracks, ensure visitor safety, and address CSX concerns regarding the continued use of their property. The fences and gates will be 4 feet tall and made of black, heavy aluminum resembling wrought iron. They will be modern intrusions on the historic scene, but will be similar in design to historic fences at other railroad areas. On the west side of the mainline tracks, the fencing will enclose the depot on three sides and separate the road and Loup Creek line from the engine house area and continue to the coaling tower, so that this historic feature can be viewed. The importance of the coaling tower as a key focal point in the town and as a remnant of the steam era can then be interpreted.

On the east side of the main tracks, the fencing will begin north of the road to the upper town. It will continue past the commercial buildings to the coaling tower. CSX and the West Virginia Department of Highways will be consulted on the design and development of road and railroad crossing requirements and controls. Agreements between the National Park Service and CSX regarding rights-of-way and access through NPS property for railroad operations and through CSX property for pedestrian access, visitor use, and park operations are being negotiated.

Waysides and brochures will explain the historical uses of yard features. Railroad cars stationed in appropriate areas will be used as exhibits. Amtrak and freight trains passing through the town on the C&O mainline tracks will be effective "exhibits" for illustrating the changes in railroad uses and equipment over the past century.

Tunnel

From the engine house and railyard, visitors will enter the commercial area of town through a pedestrian tunnel beneath the railroad tracks. This will provide safe pedestrian access from one side of the site to the other. Before entering the tunnel, they will learn about the significance of the commercial block (including missing buildings) to railroad operations and to the town. To allow for handicapped access, approach ramps with appropriate grades will be needed on both sides of the tracks. The tunnel will be located as close to the engine house and commercial buildings as practical and will avoid the ashing pit near the coaling tower.

Commercial Buildings Area

The exteriors of buildings in the commercial area will be preserved, and the interiors adapted for contemporary uses. A target period of the 1920s will be used for preservation of exterior features of the buildings. This will require the fewest changes to the structures, but will allow for an accurate representation of building fabric. The renovated and adaptively used

commercial buildings will provide a variety of services and attractions. The buildings will be made available to private enterprise under the historic leasing program or concession agreements to provide opportunities for economic improvement within the town and surrounding area. Because the buildings will not be restored to a specific historic period, a wide range of compatible uses will be possible, including a hotel or bed-and-breakfast, a restaurant, a retail store, a snack shop, a general store, offices, a hiking/fishing supply store, and other visitor/resident service businesses. Establishments focusing on railroading will be of particular interest. The facades and character of buildings will be maintained, and economic uses supported.

Pedestrian and service vehicle access to buildings will be provided, and public restrooms will be available.

Use of the commercial buildings by pedestrians and service vehicles will increase. The area in front of the buildings is within the legal railroad right-of-way. Installation of safety features (such as a fence) will add to the congestion. This congestion may negatively effect the viability of concession use of the structures. Fee acquisition or easement for this and adjacent areas from CSX will be pursued.

Building interior rehabilitation will meet life safety and health code requirements. New utilities, fire sprinklers, and alarm systems will be required. An elevator will be installed in the commercial buildings for handicapped access and to facilitate concession operations in upper floor lodging. Hazardous materials such as asbestos-containing plaster will be removed from all buildings in accordance with all state and federal regulations. It is anticipated that all buildings will be used together to meet conditions explained in the Economic Feasibility Study (appendix D) to allow for an economically viable concession operation.

Analysis of the commercial buildings has resulted in the following :

Mankin-Cox. Structural systems are not adequate. Floors will have to be replaced to support load requirements and new function/code requirements. New construction of interior is needed.

Goodman-Kincaid. Interim uses will be removed and all interiors rebuilt. A ramped platform for handicapped access to the first floor is recommended. New construction of the interior is needed.

National Bank of Thurmond. Floor systems may require strengthening. The interior historic fabric of the first floor will be retained as much as structural conditions, hazardous materials, and code requirements allow. Replacement of stairways, bathrooms, and ceilings and modifications to room layout will be necessary to accommodate installation of sprinkler, alarm, and utility systems to meet code requirements.

A request for concession interest will be circulated before rehabilitation of the buildings proceeds. If a concessioner is found who is interested in establishing a hotel/restaurant operation, additional support developments and staff protection efforts will be required by the NPS. Overnight parking for hotel guests and after-hours restaurant parking may require a telephone call-up system or valet passenger service to Southside Junction parking. Service vehicle and supply delivery requirements will increase. Some close-in early/late staff parking for concession operations will be needed. All of these activities will increase traffic on the bridge.

Interpretation in the commercial area will focus on the activities of residents and business people. Specific stories will be related about the banks, stores, and offices in adapted public rooms in the structures themselves. Interpretation of life in Thurmond, important visitors, and the growth and decline of the town will take place in or near the buildings.

Some compatible new construction may be allowed in the commercial area if it will not have an effect on the integrity of the town and the qualities defined in its National Register designation. The two houses adjacent to the commercial buildings are part of the historic scene of Thurmond and contribute to its integrity. The structural condition of these buildings will be investigated. Because of their contribution to the town's historic scene, these structures will be protected and may be used as part of the concession operation, for interpretation purposes, or for other park operation needs. Historic outbuildings, such as the stone jail, will also be investigated and protected.

Utilities

Options for utilities will be developed during design work, which will also examine the existing Dun Glen water and sewer systems. Existing systems and new utility needs for both sides of the river will be examined as a package. The Park Service will provide utilities for park facilities and will work with the town of Thurmond to jointly solve utility problems.

A new comfort station will be constructed at the Southside Junction parking area, and new water and sewer systems will be established for NPS areas in Thurmond. Land acquisition and utility easements from the railroad will be required in several locations.

Other Development

Dun Glen. Park operations to support activities at Thurmond, Southside Junction, and other areas of the park will be at Dun Glen (the area renamed for the historic Dun Glen Hotel). Support facilities will include offices for national river staff, storage for equipment and supplies needed for maintenance and river rescue and patrol, and seasonal and/or permanent staff housing.

Limited public access for picnicking, bank fishing, and environmental education will be allowed. Parking for these activities will be restricted to the upper-level parking area at Dun Glen. Pedestrians will be permitted access to the river, but no vehicles will be allowed because of space limitations. Visitor information may be dispensed in this area.

Trails. The existing Thurmond-Minden hiking trail between Route 25 near Southside Junction and the town of Minden will continue to be maintained by the National Park Service. Wayside exhibits that overlook Thurmond and viewpoints may need selective clearing, and will be developed to interpret the town and the gorge for hikers. Bridges on the trail will be improved; their historic significance and character will be determined.

As part of the parkwide trail plan, a multipurpose trail will be developed on the abandoned railroad grade from the parking area at Southside Junction to the railroad bridge near Cunard.

LAND PROTECTION

Landownership by the National Park Service on the east side of the river will be primarily confined to the lower town, which is defined as the railroad buildings, yard, and other features as well as the

commercial buildings adjacent to the railroad tracks. It is not an objective of the Park Service to acquire the residential section of town. However, the Park Service may pursue acquisition of private property in the town and adjacent areas on a willing seller/willing buyer basis. This would be to protect the historic integrity of the town, viewshed, and historic district of Thurmond.

Houses and other structures in the rest of the town of Thurmond are part of the historic scene of Thurmond and contribute to its integrity. If the NPS acquires any of these structures, outbuildings, and adjacent land, the structural condition of these buildings and property will be investigated. Because of their contribution to the town's historic scene, these structures and lands will be protected and may be used as part of the concession operation, for interpretation purposes, or for other park operation needs.

CSX is not currently interested in selling the coaling tower or the Dunloup branch line. These and additional parcels adjacent to the lower town may be acquired in the future, but only on a willing seller/willing buyer basis.

On the west side of the river, the Park Service currently owns the Southside Junction railroad property, adjacent riverfront land, and Dun Glen. Additional properties may be acquired, but only on a willing seller/willing buyer basis.

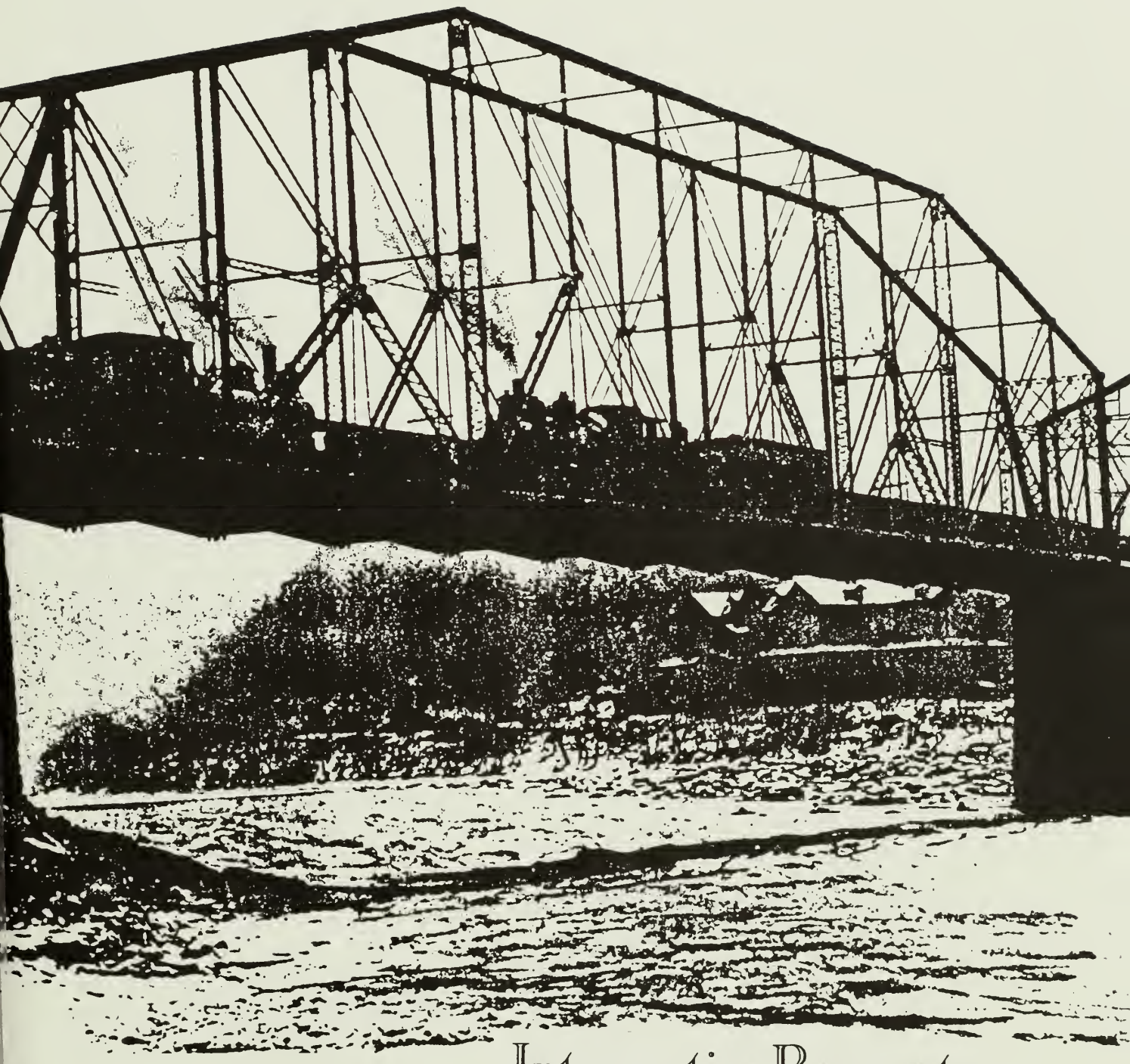
Some type of zoning or construction restrictions within the historic viewshed and Thurmond National Historic District will be needed to protect the town and adjacent areas from indiscriminate development and to maintain the character of the town and adjacent areas. The Park Service will work with the town of Thurmond and Fayette County to develop design guidelines (architectural and scenic) within the district to protect the integrity, character, and scenic qualities of the historic town.

COMMERCIAL USES

The commercial buildings in Thurmond will be made available to private enterprise under the historic leasing program or concession agreements. This will provide opportunities for the improvement of economic conditions within the town and surrounding area. Historic structure reports will be completed for all NPS-owned historic structures within the district that are eligible for lease or concession before their treatment and use. Specific requirements for the protection of these structures will be included in the agreements between the NPS and the lessee or concessioner. The scope of activities to be permitted in these structures and their immediate surroundings will also be part of the agreements. The buildings will remain in NPS ownership.

Surrounding communities such as Glen Jean, Harvey, and Red Star could experience indirect economic benefits as a result of the increased visitor use in Thurmond. These communities will be encouraged through technical and other assistance to investigate the availability of grants and other methods for promoting economic growth.

Private operation of a passenger railroad could provide access to the Southside Junction side of the river from Glen Jean. Such an operation could compliment NPS activities. The presence of the operation may affect access and circulation of visitors. It also may improve access and reduce congestion on Route 25 by giving visitors an optional way to travel to the Thurmond area.



Interpretive Prospectus

The primary purpose of resource protection and interpretation at Thurmond is to preserve, promote, and evoke a sense of a historic railroad community in a place where it once flourished. Viewed from across the New River or approached on foot from the railroad bridge, Thurmond appears to be "lost in time" because of its rural, secluded location. Preservation efforts will be instituted and activities will be introduced in the town that will re-create its historical character and bring it back to life. Within this setting visitors will learn first hand about the history of railroading and the transportation of coal within the New River Gorge and will experience the sights, sounds, and activities that supported this significant industry.

New River Gorge National River headquarters is in Glen Jean, which is about 6 miles southwest of Thurmond. Because visitor orientation and information about the entire national river and its attractions will be available there, orientation and information services at Thurmond will be minimal, and interpretation will focus on the history and significance of the town.

Interpretive programs and exhibits will reflect three interpretive themes and goals.

THEMES	GOALS
New River Gorge National River today represents a shift in American values and perceptions in regard to wildlands over the last 200 years. Wilderness once seen as a barrier to human progress is now viewed as a place for inspiration and recreation.	Visitors will learn about the sequence of settlement and use in the New River Gorge that illustrates the changes in attitudes over time.
The New River Gorge exemplifies the rapid industrialization of America at the turn of the 20th century. This industrialization prompted major man-made changes in the gorge's ecosystem and the appearance of the landscape.	Visitors will understand the role played by the New River Gorge in the industrialization of America, how industry changed the gorge landscape, why industry vanished from the New River Gorge, and how the industrial story in the gorge is representative of what happened elsewhere in America.
The character of the New River and its gorge has resulted in significant biological and cultural diversity that is well illustrated in the park.	Visitors will learn that the nature of the New River Gorge allowed both biological and cultural diversity to occur.

The planning approach calls for interpretation of the evolution of Thurmond over the years, using adapted structures to tell the stories. Various interpretive media will be developed as part of the plan.

The town's heyday was from 1910 to 1930, but events of interest occurred before and after those dates, including the change from steam to diesel — a watershed event for the C&O Railroad. Once, more than 200 men worked for the railroad at Thurmond, and as many as 20 passenger trains arrived and departed each day. Because of its coal connection, one year Thurmond earned the distinction of being the C&O's leading money-maker. Today, the railroad is part of the CSX Corporation, passenger traffic has dwindled dramatically, and fewer coal trains, which carry greater capacity cars, roll through Thurmond. The railroad has nearly abandoned the town, and the remaining buildings show many changes and renovations. Many structures have been entirely removed.

The industrial era has passed in the New River Gorge, but its legacy remains in places like Thurmond. To depict this legacy for visitors, the railroad depot, engine house, and exterior features of other structures will be used for interpretive purposes. Interpretive media such as exhibits, publications, audiovisual programs, historic furnishings, outside signs, special events, guided tours, and talks will be designed to work together so that visitors will gain an understanding of Thurmond's railroading history. They will learn about the events and activities that took place in the town; the infrastructure, equipment, and staff that was needed; changes that occurred over time; and the ways in which Thurmond was tied to the history of that era. Two major industries (railroading and coal mining) that have undergone enormous changes in recent years are linked at Thurmond. The goal is to improve visitor knowledge of those industries, the times, and the lives affected.

The commercial row of buildings is slated for visitor services such as food, souvenir sales, and perhaps lodging. A staging area across the river at Southside Junction will provide a parking lot, restrooms, orientation, and a seasonal shuttle to transport visitors to the town. Pedestrian access will also be arranged. Offices and other administrative functions will exist for the most part at headquarters in Glen Jean and in Dun Glen. However, some space in Thurmond structures will be needed for support functions. These functions should not be visible to visitors.

The following describes interpretive media and services at the conceptual level. More detail will be developed at subsequent planning and design stages.

Southside Junction Staging Area

After parking, visitors will proceed to a sheltered waiting area from which they will proceed on foot, or be picked up by a shuttle vehicle.

The shelter will contain public restrooms and orientation wayside exhibits. The exhibits will provide information about access to the town on foot or by shuttle, and will graphically illustrate the layout of the town, including the Southside Junction area. Exhibits may include historical photographs. Some information will be provided about the park as a whole for those who wish to visit other areas.

The wayside exhibits should increase interest in visiting and prepare people for their visit.

Depot

This building will be the closest to the shuttle drop-off point and pedestrian access, and will be the first structure visited. An exterior wayside orientation exhibit will sketch the present day layout of the town. The sign will be located where arriving visitors can use it to identify various major features. Historic photos and artist's sketches will be used to show the past appearance of the town, including features no longer extant. A free information folder may be dispensed at this location or at the shuttle stop across the river. These devices will prepare visitors for a self-guided tour of the town. Questions can be asked of roving interpreters or personnel engaged in presenting programs or selling interpretive literature. Program times and titles can be publicized on a bulletin board adjacent to the orientation exhibit.

Both floors of the two-story depot once housed important functions, and portions of both are needed to interpret the story. The ground level was devoted to passengers and related services. The second floor held the vital marshalling activities and the coal company connection that once made Thurmond the leading money-maker on the entire line.

The interior of the depot will be used for a variety of interpretive functions. It will also provide a waiting room for Amtrak passengers and passengers on special excursion trains. The use of space in the building is described, beginning on the north end, in the following paragraphs.

First Floor

Baggage (Freight) Room. Furnishings will re-create the contents of this room, divided into two areas. Baggage and C&O company mail were on one side. For the mail, pigeonholes were marked for the track manager, supervisor of tracks, and the section foreman. On the other side was U.S. mail. Locked canvas mailbags, a mail cart, storage racks, stalls for sorting mail by geographic area, a desk, chairs, and a floor-mounted scale were the furnishings that occupied the baggage room.

Historically the room was staffed by a baggage clerk and a station porter. Their functions were complemented elsewhere by a separate freight depot at one time, and a mail and baggage car staffed by a postal clerk.

Express Room. This room is designated for administrative use, and will not be open to the public. A sign on the exterior will identify it as the express room.

Union News Room. A cooperating association will sell publications and other interpretive materials in this room. Display racks, a cash register, sales desk, and storage cabinets are needed. This room and a portion of the adjacent waiting room (up to the ticket booth) will be closed off by a movable gate/partition so that sales stock will be secure during times when part of the waiting room is open for train passengers, but the depot sales area is not staffed. During routine operation, this unobtrusive partition will be repositioned for free flow of visitor traffic.

Waiting Rooms. Most of the remainder of the first floor will be used as a waiting room/exhibit area. Reproductions of historic furnishings such as wooden benches, clocks, spittoons, trash cans, and water coolers will be placed in the area for visitor use and as interpretive devices.

Walls will display graphics that relate to the Thurmond railroad story, including passenger railroading. Objects can be used in exhibits only in the portion of the room that is secure after hours. It would be appropriate to display floor plan diagrams to show the evolution of the building and its functional areas. It would be interesting to demonstrate the separation of the sexes that was once considered necessary — separate waiting rooms were once provided. Information about the evolution of race relations would be educational as well, and would help to illustrate the changes in activities in the building over the years.

Small public restrooms will be provided at the south end of the building.

Ticket Office. Furnishings will be placed in this small space that are consistent with its use — to sell tickets, announce trains, and secure cash and ticket supplies.

Second Floor

Yardmaster's office. Furnishings placed in this space will approximate those used by the yardmaster: rolltop desk, chalkboard listing crew assignments, cupboard, locker, wall notices, and so on.

Conductors Room. This room will be used by visitors as a viewing area into the yardmaster's office next door. A simple exhibit panel or two will interpret both functions — the duties of the yardmaster and conductor and their places in the hierarchy of railroad employees.

Signal/Telegraph Office. Furnishings and simple exhibit panels will relate the activities of the dispatcher. Items may include a telegraph key, desk and chair, and wall devices. The room will be open to visitors to grant access to the trackside windows with a good view of passing trains. The storage room will be refurnished with lanterns, batteries, and other items. A historic door to the exterior will be restored to improve visitor circulation.

[Note: If funding becomes available in the future, the following uses for the remainder of the second floor are recommended.]

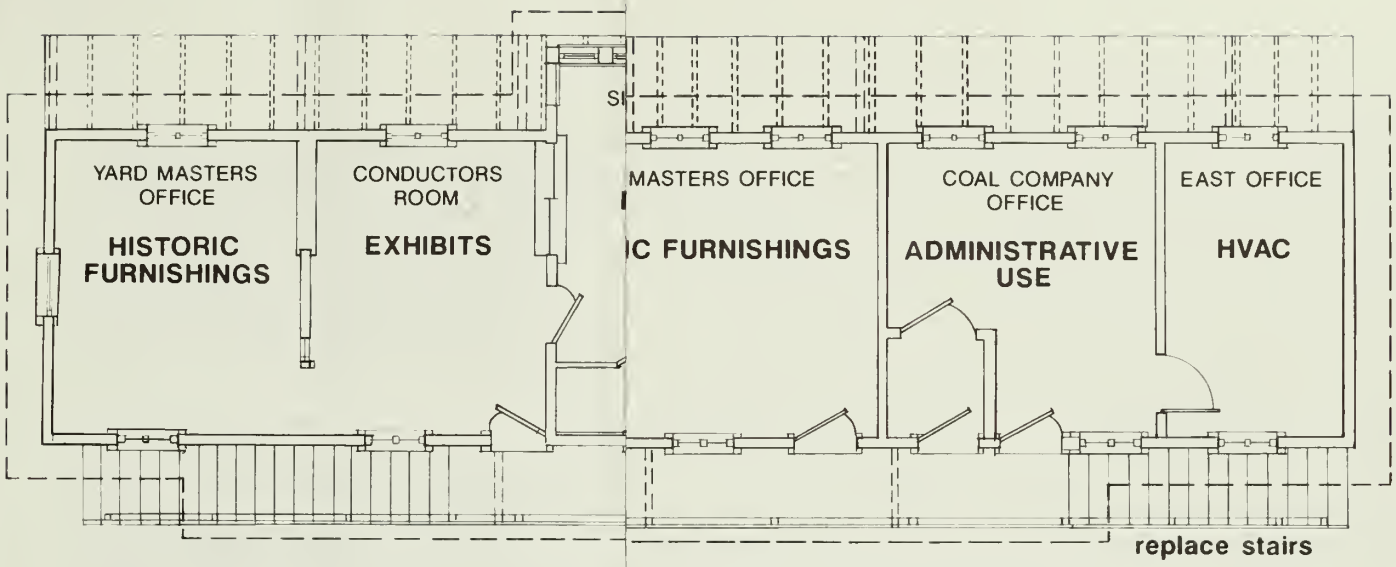
Track Supervisor's Office. This area will be used for administrative purposes and will not be open to public.

File Room. This area will be used for administrative purposes and will not be open to public.

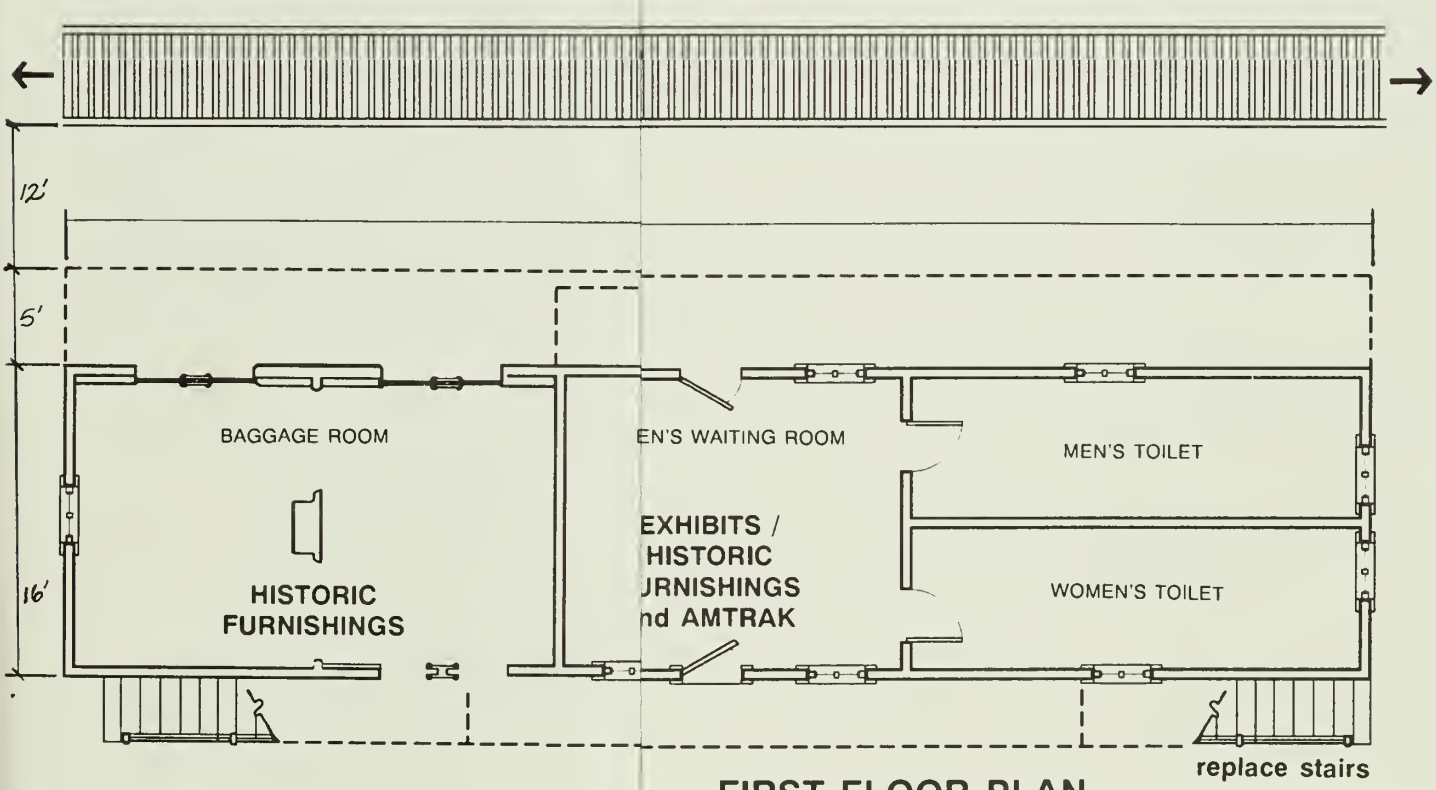
Car Distributor's Office. An interactive video monitor will be placed in this room. It will show an audiovisual program produced for use in both the depot and engine house, and will include short segments that can be randomly accessed by visitors. The laser disc for the video will contain oral history interviews of people who once worked in Thurmond. The oral histories will present a significant piece of the story and will introduce the lives of real people into the historic place. The audiovisual material will be presented in short segments so that no seating will be required and crowds will not gather. Duplicate equipment would allow the program to be seen in both areas and would increase viewing opportunities.

Chief Clerk's Office. This area will house exhibits which will interpret staffing and the duties of personnel with offices on second floor of depot. These exhibits may include large cutout figures representing office occupants — the cast of characters.

Trainmaster's Office. Furnishings will re-create those used by the trainmaster, the functioning head of the station.



SECOND FLOOR PLAN

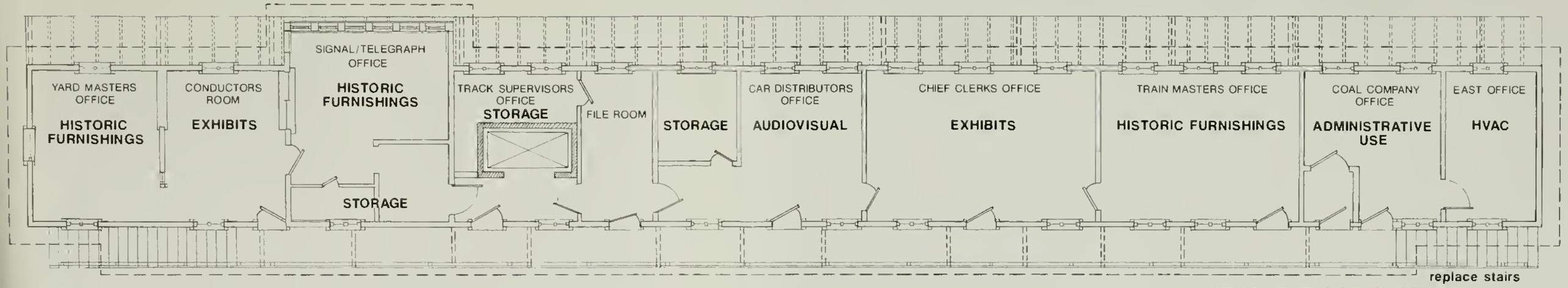


FIRST FLOOR PLAN

DEPOT

THURMOND

New River Gorge National River
United States Department of the Interior / National Park Service



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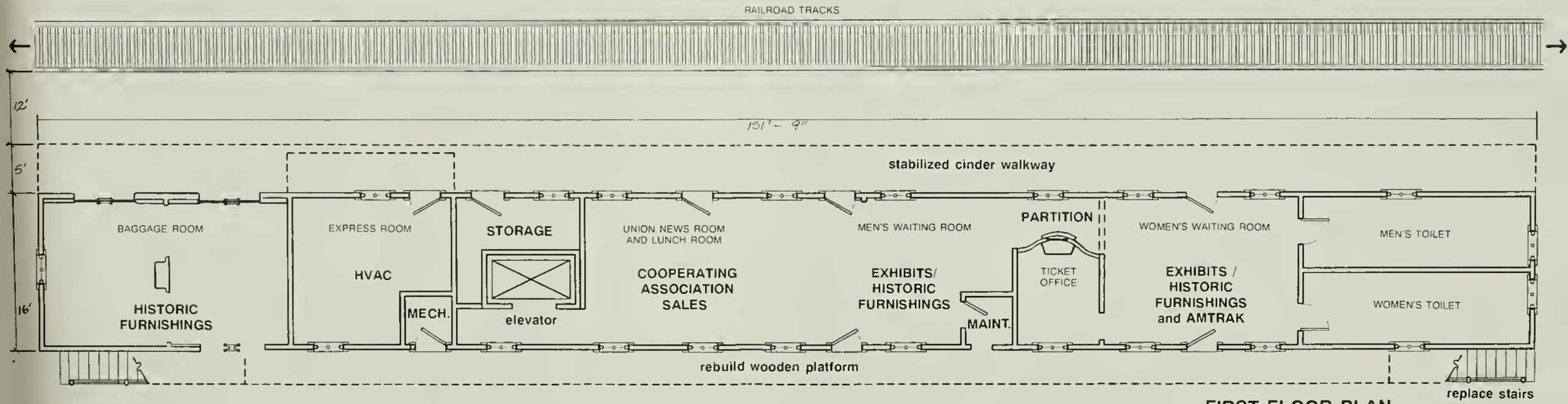

FIRST FLOOR PLAN

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DEPOT

THURMOND

New River Gorge National River
United States Department of the Interior / National Park Service

McKell Coal and Coke Company Office and East Office. This area will be reserved for administrative use, and will not be open to the public. A McKell Coal and Coke Company sign on the office will allow recognition of the significance of a coal company office located in a railroad depot.

Visitor Circulation

Because of the narrow stairs and second floor walkway, visitors should circulate in a one-way traffic pattern, entering by one stairway, traversing the length of the building, and exiting by a rear stairway (to be reconstructed). Signing should clearly indicate the one-way pattern, which will alleviate traffic jams.

Engine House

This building housed steam engine maintenance activities (light repairs) until 1963. With the advent of diesel engines, its function changed to a car inspection and repair shop.

Inside the engine house and immediately outside, pieces of rolling stock once typical in Thurmond will be displayed. In priority order, the stock to be acquired are:

(1) A Mallet steam engine or Consolidation G-9 steam engine.

(2) A coal hopper of an earlier era (displayed with coal contents).

(3) A caboose.

(4) A passenger coach car or combine car (mail and packages).

(5) A diesel engine.

Not all of these may be available. A pre-Mallet Shay engine could also be used, but is probably not obtainable. In addition to the pieces listed, a tank car for water storage should be acquired for safety as well as for interpretive purposes. One or more of these pieces of rolling stock should display the familiar yellow and black C&O Chessie cat logo.

The first step in the acquisition process is to list and investigate known pieces, their condition and location. A search for others would follow. Stock in good condition is preferred. Rolling stock in poor condition or in inaccessible sites is less desirable because of the increased costs for repair and transportation, but one piece could be acquired or donated that would serve as a demonstration of repair activities. Presumably the work would be accomplished by volunteers, with interpretation of the work being equal in importance to the finished product.

After information has been gathered on stock sources, locations, and conditions, decisions can be made on which pieces should be acquired. Then cost estimates on transportation and repairs should be prepared, funding obtained, and purchase and moving of stock begun. This process will be time consuming and should begin soon. Until the study is completed, costs cannot be estimated accurately. It is possible that some pieces may be acquired by donation.

Moving equipment to Thurmond should be coordinated with other site development so that large pieces of rolling stock do not arrive prematurely and obstruct construction activities. At least one switch, connecting NPS-owned tracks to active CSX tracks, will have to be maintained in order to move rolling stock on or off NPS property.

Inside the engine house, along with one or more pieces of rolling stock, will be a

number of other interpretive devices and programs:

a working scale model of Thurmond with audiovisual programs and graphic backdrops

exhibits in two rooms depicting the functions of the offices of general foreman and crew

exhibits that explain large existing fixed pieces of equipment from both steam and diesel eras (drill press, steam boiler, swing arm hoist, car puller, blacksmith gear, water testing station, steam gauge testing station, wheel hoist pit, etc.)

exhibits that display and explain additional key pieces of portable equipment/tools

an exhibit depicting the workings of a steam engine (may include computer graphics)

exhibits explaining workload, staffing, functions of the engine house, etc.

an interactive video monitor with an audiovisual program containing oral history interviews produced for use in both the depot and engine house

various scene-setting accoutrements

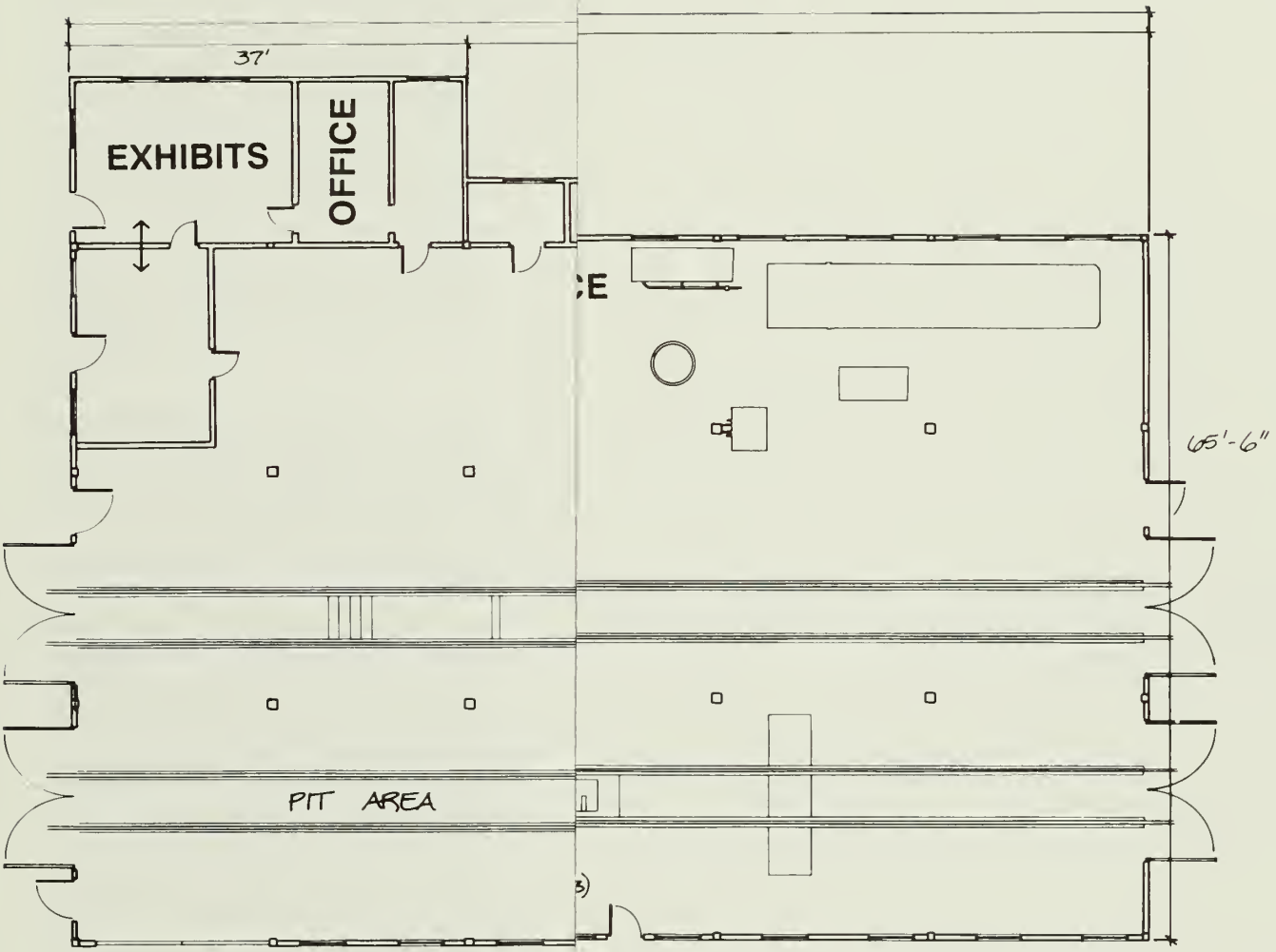
The scale model and its associated components could be housed in the tool rooms in the engine house, which could be expanded somewhat to include sufficient space for this adaptive use. By enlarging the tool rooms there will be space for the model and for tiered audience seating. It will also provide an enclosed area for better security, sound environment (acoustics), and climate and lighting control. The room can still be interpreted from the exterior as a tool room.

Programs scheduled frequently throughout the day will use the scale model to explain important concepts to visitors. The interpretation will be provided by volunteers or uniformed staff. Between programs, visitors will be able to get a closer look at the model, but will not be allowed near enough to touch it. Some automatic or viewer-activated visuals will also be available.

The model will be basic to visitor understanding of the historic appearance of the town. It will show many structures that no longer exist, including missing buildings, the turntable, and other features. The east yard, central in the Thurmond story because of its marshalling function, will not be open to visitors and will not be acquired by the NPS. Therefore, this marshalling function must be represented by interpretive devices. Computer graphics could vividly depict this activity on a large screen video monitor, along with other topics to be selected, such as coaling, watering, and sanding; sidings and signals; and movements of stock in yard operations. If not explained elsewhere, the routes of coal cars to Thurmond and the destinations and frequency of coal trains leaving Thurmond should be demonstrated graphically.

These various elements of the Thurmond story, mixed with historic photos, can be combined on a laser disc and used in a variety of ways. They can be programmed as visual elements of an interpreter-presented program, to emphasize any desired topic. They can also be used as random images, especially the historic photos, during the self-guided, non-program times.

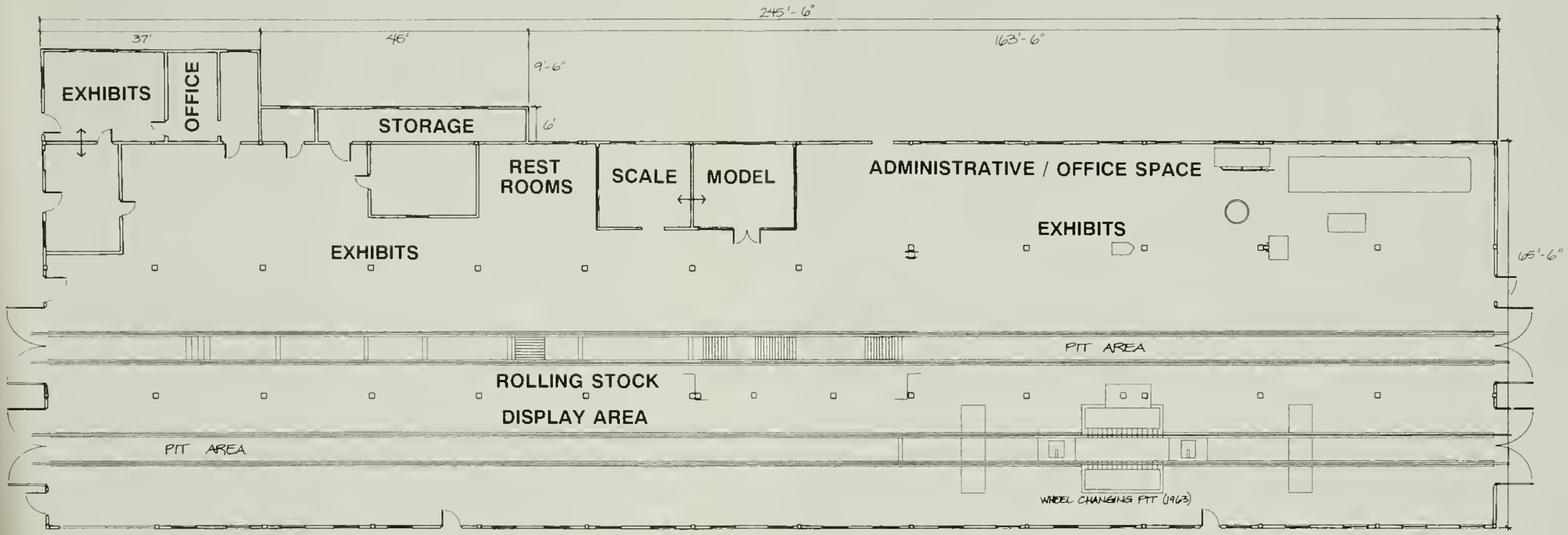
The first step in ensuring that this interpretive device works well is to prepare an interpretive concept for all the elements, including personal services, model, graphic backdrop, and audiovisual components.



ENGINE HOUSE

THURMOND

New River Gorge National River
United States Department of the Interior / National Park Service



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ENGINE HOUSE

THURMOND

New River Gorge National River
United States Department of the Interior / National Park Service

Objectives should be determined, along with operating requirements, story lines, and so on. This will be used to guide the rest of the planning of the project, including the extent of movement needed in the scale model, the area it should cover, and integration of audiovisual elements with the model and personal services. The design of the program is vital; the program will only be as good as the interpretive advance planning. Construction of the model will occur as part of the planning rather than production funding phase because of the amount of time that will be required.

While the list of exhibits in addition to the scale model may appear lengthy, some will be no more than modest-sized panels with text and simple illustrations that would be situated adjacent to large pieces of fixed equipment. Others may re-create original contents, such as the seniority list, a blueprint of a steam engine, or a row of chalkboards with crew assignments attached to walls in the crew office. Clocks may also be used at appropriate places; accurate time was an integral part of railroad operations. A crank-type yard phone, worker time cards, and other devices will be appropriate in the general foreman's office. The intention is to give enough information so that visitors will understand that the general foreman supervised the operation and repair of engines and was assisted by the crew dispatcher clerk and shift foremen in the two front offices.

Access to displayed rolling stock may be improved by providing steps or platforms. Demonstrations that involve potentially hazardous tool operation will require that the safety of workers and visitors be assured. Interpretive panels will be needed for these large displays.

Use of silhouettes of workmen might be appropriate to "people" the large expanse of space in the engine house.

Fixed pieces of equipment, such as the drill press, will need repair — perhaps not to working condition, but to an exhibit standard.

A number of spaces in the building will be used for storage and for other administrative purposes. These spaces include the electrical shop and the washroom/storage rooms. In addition, the temporary enclosure between the electrical shop and tool rooms can be upgraded for this purpose.

Public restrooms will be provided in the engine house.

Exterior Features

A number of exterior features will be interpreted: railroad tracks, switches and signals, coaling tower, water tanks and water column, sanding shed, sanding tower, the diesel servicing pit and related fixtures, diesel fueling tower, and other railroad support structures. These railroad features, both steam and diesel, and commercial structures will be interpreted by exterior signing (wayside exhibits).

Safe access to major buildings and yard features will be assured by unobtrusive pathways, including rail crossing devices, especially necessary for visitors using wheelchairs. The exterior signing and visitor access provisions should not detract from the appearance of the town. It should look like a working railroad town, not a museum.

Commercial Buildings

Use of interpretive devices will be limited in these buildings since they will serve commercial purposes. However, there may be some objects or photographs related to the historic uses that would be appropriate for display. It would also be fitting if the commercial uses were conducted in a setting that retained historic features and finishes while being efficient and practical.

STAFFING

Uniformed staff will provide interpretation and will protect and maintain the physical facilities. Cooperative agreements might be established with railroad historical societies and model railroad clubs. Railroad buffs could assist by giving programs or helping to maintain rolling stock.

Thurmond's season of operation will primarily be from April to October, with special arrangements for school groups out of season. During the summer, the period of heaviest visitation, an active program of visitor services will be available, with a core of uniformed staff and a potentially large number of volunteers. All buildings will be open and scheduled programs offered daily. From November to March, only self-guided exterior access would be available. Except for the depot waiting room, buildings would be closed.

RESEARCH

As with staffing, research will be accomplished by NPS personnel assisted by railroad historical societies and model railroad clubs. Others with railroad expertise could also be asked for help. Former employees and residents will be a valuable source of information. Interviews with these people should begin as soon as possible. Their information will be used to guide various interpretive efforts and some interviews will be filmed for the audiovisual program in the depot.

Previous documentation efforts — the HABS/HAER project and the Historic Structure Reports — will be invaluable as sources of information during the development phase and in the interpretation of Thurmond.

It is recommended that a research coordinator position be established on the park staff, financed by planning funds requested by and allotted to the park. This person would accomplish tasks such as locating rolling stock and would coordinate efforts of park staff and interpretive planners to locate and acquire information and artifacts/objects to be exhibited. This staff appointment could extend for two or three years, or whatever is reasonable in view of the workload and development schedule.

Access to and ultimate disposition of railroad records at the CSX Hinton division office should be investigated because they will probably offer valuable information about Thurmond operations.

Before structural renovations begin at Thurmond, all existing evidence should be documented. There is much to be learned from remaining features and shadows of features.

Research to locate and acquire original furniture and fixtures should be done. CSX still has some of this material.

ACCESSIBILITY

Providing safe access to the town of Thurmond will be a challenge. The shuttle system, pedestrian pathways, fencing to separate visitors from active rail lines, and other developments are intended to move

large numbers of people safely into an industrial town where railroad tracks take the place of the main street and where space does not permit addition of modern facilities without adverse effects on historic resources and the character of the place.

In addition, the needs of special populations must be met. As much of the town as possible will be accessible to visitors with physical disabilities. All video programs with narration will be closed-captioned for the hearing-impaired. An "enhanced" audio tape description should be prepared for those with sight loss. This tape would include the whole town, with sound effects and ample verbal description.

The engine house, commercial buildings, and first floor of the depot will be accessible to visitors in wheelchairs. Handicapped access to the second floor of the depot may include an elevator. Exterior waysides and publications can explain the functions of upstairs rooms. As previously mentioned, the audiovisual program may be included in both in the depot and the engine house.

PUBLICATIONS

Thurmond is an excellent subject for a variety of overview publications and also for those on narrower topics. A free general folder should be provided; site bulletins can then treat individual subjects in more detail. Their number will only be restricted by the ability of the staff to prepare, print, and re-stock.

A handbook, as part of the NPS handbook series, could be prepared for Thurmond. The socioeconomic theme is especially suited for such a publication.

Other materials are commercially available and should be screened for potential as sales items. A wide array of educational material (publications, videos, artifact replicas, etc.), should be available to visitors for purchase. The depot sales area should be restricted to educational material, while any outlet in the commercial block could contain more varied material, such as T-shirts and souvenir items.

HISTORIC FURNISHINGS

Furnishings will be original pieces or replicas. The period represented should be between 1920 and 1940. A furnishing study will include all spaces to be furnished.

SUBJECTS TO BE INTERPRETED AT THURMOND

C&O Railroad history in the New River Gorge, and its coal connection.

Thurmond as a typical C&O Railroad operation.

Trends in equipment and workforce.

Thurmond as a social and business center in the gorge.

The railroad's role in the culture that developed in the gorge.

The technology of railroading -- how things work.

Railroading occupations.

Geography's effect on the town and industry.

The people — the workers, the personalities, the way of life.

The context - the park, the regional railroading operation, coal mining operations, utilization of energy sources.

LIST OF PRODUCTS TO BE PROVIDED BY HARPERS FERRY CENTER

Audiovisual Programs

Video laser disc program - oral histories for the depot and engine house.

Video laser disc program in conjunction with scale model — engine house.

Exhibits

Exhibits in depot waiting rooms, in trainmaster clerk's office, and to a lesser extent in 3 or 4 rooms as a supplement to other media.

Exhibits in engine house — tool room scale model of Thurmond, steam engine exhibit.

Exhibits in crew office and general foreman's office.

Miscellaneous smaller exhibits.

Scene-setting accoutrements.

Waysides

Thurmond - approximately 25 exhibits to interpret exterior features and provide orientation. Approximately 12 smaller exhibits to interpret features inside the engine house.

Thurmond-Minden Trail - four panels to provide trailhead orientation and interpretation of Thurmond-related views.

Southside Junction/Dun Glen - orientation panels at staging area, interpretation of Dun Glen Hotel and Southside community, trail orientation to Cunard, interpretation of New River whitewater history/activities (approximately six panels).

Historic Furnishings - if appropriate

Baggage room
Waiting rooms
Yardmaster's Office
Signal/Telegraph Office
Trainmaster's Office
Ticket Office

Publications

Thurmond folder
Handbook

Plan Implementation

COMPLIANCE

Consultation with the West Virginia state historic preservation officer (SHPO) regarding the alternatives considered for this plan was undertaken even though the SHPO had previously commented on the *General Management Plan* for New River Gorge National River under the 1981 programmatic memorandum of agreement. In comments on the draft DCP/IP/EA, the SHPO stated support for the preferred alternative (now the final plan). Concern was expressed on several issues which have been addressed in conversation or in the final plan.

The final plan has been expanded from that proposed in the 1982 GMP to include the engine house and commercial buildings and new actions and activities. Under the August 1990 programmatic agreement, the NPS has consulted with the SHPO and ACHP in determining the final plan. Included in appendix E is a list of actions from the final plan. This list of actions delineates: (1) "programmatic exclusions" that are not likely to have adverse effects on cultural resources that may be implemented without further SHPO and ACHP review, (2) actions not excluded but agreed to not require further review, and (3) actions not excluded but requiring review by SHPO and ACHP during design stages.

Actions described in this plan resulting in ground disturbance will require archeological evaluation prior to construction. These evaluations will occur in consultation with the SHPO.

Any development at Dun Glen will consider possible effects on the remains of the Dun Glen Hotel and requirements for archeological evaluations. Foundations of buildings, railroad structures and features, and other remains exist throughout the study area. Prior to any development or ground-disturbing activities, these resources will be evaluated.

Surveys for rare plants at Thurmond and Southside Junction have been completed. Consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the West Virginia Department of Natural Resources has taken place. No rare, threatened, or endangered species (federal or state) have been found in the study area.

A Statement of Findings, which explains planned actions in historic or existing buildings within the 100-year floodplain, has been prepared to accompany this plan.

Preparation of a sedimentation and erosion control plan will be required for each part of this plan prior to construction.

STAFFING AND OPERATIONS

This plan will require an increase in staff to provide on-site interpretation and other visitor services, resource protection, and maintenance. Cooperative agreements might be established with local C&O historical societies, model railroad clubs, or railroad groups to provide some of the interpretation (see specific information later in this section).

ESTIMATED TOTAL DEVELOPMENT COSTS (1992 dollars)

These estimates include the costs for resource preservation, new support development, utilities, interpretive media, historic structure reports, topographic and other surveys, comprehensive design, construction drawings, and gross construction. Additional costs for the rehabilitation of Route 25, rolling stock, annual railroad switch maintenance costs, and the staffing requirements are indicated.

	Gross Construction	Construction Planning	Total Costs
SOUTHSIDE JUNCTION STAGING AREA			
Access road and intersection improvements	807,000	185,000	992,000
Parking (150), shuttlebus turnaround	654,000	150,000	804,000
Comfort station/shelter (separate listing for utilities systems)	381,000	87,000	468,000
Walkways/boardwalk, fencing	295,000	68,000	363,000
Traffic signals	147,000	34,000	181,000
Landscaping	512,000	117,000	629,000
Interpretive exhibits (HFC)	30,000	6,000	36,000
Call-up telephone system (concession)	13,000	3,000	16,000
Subtotal	**2,839,000**	**650,000**	**3,489,000**
CSX RAILROAD BRIDGE			
Addition of new walkway on existing railroad bridge	1,470,000	337,000	1,807,000
Adjacent walkways and railroad-type landscaping	60,000	14,000	74,000
Subtotal	**1,530,000**	**351,000**	**1,881,000**
OR CONSTRUCTION OF NEW PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE	**2,371,000**	**543,000**	**2,914,000**

DEPOT AREA			
Preservation/rehabilitation of depot building	1,707,000	391,000	2,098,000
Hazardous material sampling, testing, and cleanup	66,000	15,000	81,000
Site cleanup, access pathways, safety features, shuttle turnaround, parking, bank stabilization, and railroad-type landscaping	495,000	116,000	611,000
Exhibits, waysides, interior furnishings, publications and orientation/information (HFC)	232,000	68,000	300,000
Subtotal	**2,500,000**	**590,000**	**3,090,000**
WATER TANKS AREA			
Preservation/rehabilitation of water tanks and stabilize/rehabilitate post office structure	72,000	18,000	90,000
Hazardous material sampling, testing, and cleanup	27,000	6,000	33,000
Site cleanup, access pathways, safety features, fences preservation of small structures, yard features, and railroad-type landscaping	159,000	36,000	195,000
Exhibits and waysides (HFC)	15,000	3,000	18,000
Subtotal	**273,000**	**63,000**	**336,000**

ENGINE HOUSE AREA			
Preservation/rehabilitation of engine house structure	4,697,000	1,076,000	5,773,000
Hazardous material sampling, testing, and cleanup including riverbank	272,000	61,000	333,000
Site cleanup, access pathways, safety features, preservation of small structures, yard features, and railroad-type landscaping	979,000	224,000	1,203,000
Exhibits, scale models, restoration/repairs of historic railcars or engines, and small audiovisual programs (HFC)	946,000	420,000	1,366,000
Subtotal	**6,894,000**	**1,781,000**	**8,675,000**
TUNNEL			
Construction of a pedestrian walkway beneath railroad tracks from engine house to commercial buildings area, adjacent walkways, ramps, walls, and railroad-type landscaping			
Subtotal	**638,000**	**146,000**	**784,000**
COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS AREA*			
Preservation/rehabilitation of National Bank of Thurmond, Goodman-Kincaid, Mankin-Cox, and as a concession hotel/restaurant/retail or similar	5,667,000	1,299,000	6,966,000
Preservation of two houses adjacent	851,000	198,000	1,049,000

Hazardous material sampling, testing, and cleanup	376,000	86,000	462,000
Site cleanup, access walkways, safety features, and railroad-type landscaping	240,000	54,000	294,000
Exhibits and waysides (HFC)	30,000	6,000	36,000
Subtotal	**7,164,000**	**1,643,000**	**8,807,000**
UTILITIES			
National Park Service areas only (both sides of the river, separate systems)**	1,888,000	377,000	2,265,000
Town (connecting water and sewer systems, including road work)	2,507,000	478,000	2,985,000
Electrical and telephone**	46,000	11,000	57,000
Subtotal	**4,441,000**	**866,000**	**5,307,000**
DUN GLEN AREA			
Rehabilitation and repair of existing buildings, addition of fences, etc.	1,144,000	262,000	1,406,000
Waysides (HFC)	15,000	3,000	18,000
Subtotal	**1,159,000**	**265,000**	**1,424,000**
TRAILS			
Improvements to Minden and Cunard trail/bridges	432,000	99,000	531,000
Waysides (HFC)	40,000	8,000	48,000
Subtotal	**472,000**	**107,000**	**579,000**

RAILROAD ACCESS AND RELATED COSTS			
Various vehicle and pedestrian rights-of-way, and warning devices	208,000	48,000	256,000
Rolling stock	200,000	46,000	246,000
Subtotal	**408,000**	**94,000**	**502,000**
GRAND TOTAL	**28,318,000**	**6,556,000**	**34,874,000**

*Some costs may be incurred by the lessee or concessioner for the commercial buildings, depending on actual agreements.

**Costs are for NPS development actions only and assume acquisition of the existing railroad structures. Creation of a utility district might be necessary with the National Park Service and the town sharing expenses for studies and development.

RELATED COSTS			
Improvements to State Route 25			
Glen Jean to Thurmond	20,600,000	2,800,000	23,400,000
Thurmond to Stone Cliff	4,100,000	600,000	4,700,000
Switch maintenance	1,550		

STAFFING AND OPERATIONS (1992 Dollars)

An increase of full-time and seasonal park staff and operating funds for on-site interpretation, resource protection, and maintenance will be required to implement this plan. Cooperative agreements could be established with local C&O historical societies or others to assist with interpretive programs and other projects.

Maintenance Division

Work Leader WG 6	36,346
Maintenance Mechanic WG 7	36,943
Maintenance Worker WG 5	31,680
3 Seasonal Maintenance workers WG 3 (1.5 FTE)	34,307
(2 additional seasonal workers for year-round operation) WG 3 (1 FTE)	22,871
Custodian WG 5	31,680
Sewer Plant Operator WG 8 (.5 FTE)	17,816
Electrician WG 7 (.5 FTE)	19,126
Carpenter WG 9 (.25 FTE)	9,236
Plumber WG 8 (.25 FTE)	8,908
	258,150

Supplies and materials		62,500
Annual costs for 3 vehicles		14,400
Truck (1) annual costs		10,000
Operations increase subtotal		**345,050**
Start up cost for equipment	75,000	
Start up winter equipment	30,000	
Utilities	20,000	
	125,000	

Interpretation and Visitor Services Division

Supervisory Park Ranger GS 9		41,000
Lead Park Ranger GS 7		35,800
Park Ranger GS 5		30,500
6 Seasonal Park Rangers GS 5 (3 FTE)		69,800
(2 additional seasonal rangers for year-round operations) GS 5 (1 FTE)		24,600
		201,700
Brochures - annual publication costs		10,000
2 vehicles annual costs		12,000
Rolling stock (railroad engines/cars) annual maintenance		10,000
Supplies		9,000
Operations increase subtotal		**242,700**
Start up cost for equipment	**10,000**	

Resource Management and Visitor Protection Division

4 Park Rangers GS 7		136,000
3 Park Rangers GS 5		75,000
2 vehicles annual costs		12,000
Supplies		5,000
Operations increase subtotal		**228,000**
Start up cost for equipment	15,000	
Type 5 wildland fire engine	75,000	
fire cache	6,000	
EMS - first aid station	10,000	
Rescue equipment start up costs	3,000	
	109,000	
Management Assistant/Concession Specialist GS 11		**36,747**

GRAND TOTAL

Start up costs	**244,000**	
Annual operation increase		**852,497**

IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE

The recommended order of implementation is based on current information regarding land ownership and possible NPS acquisitions, building conditions, local concerns, and availability of and needs for utilities. This listing may be modified due to unforeseen changes in planning, design, or other factors and is not intended to be applied rigidly.

Emergency stabilization
Utilities
Depot restoration
Southside Junction parking/comfort station/sidewalk
Pedestrian walkway on bridge
Protection fences
Engine house
Yard features / watertanks
Commercial buildings
Balance of repair/restoration on east side
Trails
Route 25 rehabilitation
Balance of development on west side
Pedestrian tunnel

DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES

(1) Depot with adjacent parking, bank stabilization, and utility systems
(2) Southside Junction parking, bridge access, and utilities
(3) Engine house/yard/water tanks
(4) Commercial buildings with additional access and circulation requirements and support facilities

Appendixes

The alternatives considered in this document are based on the direction given in the 1982 *General Management Plan*, the 1988 *Management and Development Guidelines* that updated the GMP and established a framework for site-specific planning, and the park's "Interpretation Program Plan." The following factors aided in determining the scope and focus of the Thurmond planning project.

NEW RIVER GORGE NATIONAL RIVER

Park Purpose

The purpose of New River Gorge National River is to conserve and interpret outstanding natural, scenic, and historic values and objects in and around New River Gorge.

Resource-based recreation that does not impair resource values is allowed.

Park Significance

Size and topographic relief make the gorge an outstanding scenic resource in West Virginia.

New River Gorge provides some of the best extended season whitewater boating in the eastern United States.

New River is the top warm water stream fishery in the state.

New River is believed to be the oldest river on the North American continent, and it illustrates the "rejuvenated stream" process.

The river corridor has unusual plant and animal diversity.

New River Gorge contains remains of the mining and transportation of "smokeless" coal, which played a major role in America's industrial history.

Management Objectives

Protect and maintain the natural diversity of plants and animals.

Sustain the warm-water fishery while protecting natural diversity.

Preserve outstanding scenic views in and around the gorge – preserve the natural setting in the gorge from I-64 north except at interpreted cultural sites and existing communities; conserve the rural pastoral scenery south of I-64.

Encourage visitors to use related interpretive and recreation sites outside the park boundary.

Preserve coal mining, railroading, and other historic resources that best illustrate park significance.

In cooperation with others, achieve and maintain water quality to meet state standards that allow for primary human contact.

Develop a system of land- and water-based recreation opportunities that allow visitors to experience the park's resources to the extent that natural, cultural, and scenic values are not impaired.

The local towns and communities associated with New River are significant resources and integral to the visitor experience; therefore, the National Park Service will work with these communities to help perpetuate their character and vitality.

Work with the community to maximize economic benefits related to park development without impairing key resources.

Interpretive Themes

New River Gorge National River today represents a change in American values regarding wildlands over the last 200 years. Wilderness once viewed as a barrier to human progress is now preserved for inspiration and recreation.

New River is unique because it was formed so much earlier than most of the rivers seen today, and, unlike most rivers, the New has retained its course despite significant geological changes.

The character of the New River and its gorge has resulted in a significant concentration of biological and cultural diversity that is well illustrated in the park.

New River Gorge exemplifies the rapid industrialization of America at the turn of the 20th century. This industrialization prompted major manmade changes in the gorge's ecosystem and the appearance of the landscape.

In order to successfully find, use, and enjoy park resources, visitors to the park require special information.

INTRODUCTION

This report documents a structural investigation of the historic structures in Thurmond. The investigation was performed during the week of September 19-23, 1988, by structural engineer Larry Reynolds, civil engineer Nellie Lance, and outdoor recreation planner Linda Romola. This report discusses only the major structural problems and does not address the numerous minor problems.

BACKGROUND

To assist the planning team in developing alternatives for Thurmond, a cursory investigation of the historic structures was performed. The structures that were investigated included the engine house, commercial buildings, and water tanks. The depot was investigated in 1986, and those findings and recommendations are summarized in this report.

FINDINGS

Engine House

The most serious problem with the engine house is that one of the timber columns that supported a roof truss has failed. This is a serious problem and, if not corrected, could lead to a partial collapse of the building. Also, much of the wall sheathing in this area is missing. This allows rain and snow to enter the building and cause further damage.

The heel joint of the roof trusses consists of a double bottom chord member bolted to a vertical web member with one bolt. The bottom chord on many of the trusses has split from the bolt to the end of the member and, therefore, there is little or no bearing surface for the bolt. It appears that the bottom chord tension forces are being resisted by friction between the bolt and bottom chord. This is an unsafe condition, especially under heavy snow loads when large tension forces are developed.

Virtually all of the timbers in the engine house have been treated with creosote. There are restrictions regarding the use of creosote for interior applications. Generally, it is required that two coats of sealer be applied to all of the creosote-treated wood. It does not appear that a sealer has been applied to the creosote-treated wood in the engine house.

Commercial Buildings

Almost all of the structural framing members in the National Bank of Thurmond and in the Mankin-Cox buildings are concealed by floor and ceiling finishes, so no assessment of their condition could be made. However, there do not appear to be any major structural problems with either of these buildings.

The Goodman-Kincaid building is essentially a shell consisting of 18-inch stone masonry walls. There is no roof framing, and a few rusted iron floor beams and columns are all that remain of the second floor framing.

The stone masonry walls are approximately 40 feet high and are unbraced for that height on three sides of the building. The fourth wall is common with the National Bank of Thurmond building. This means that the unbraced height to thickness ratio of the three walls is 27, which exceeds the building code maximum allowable of 20. Although the walls did not show any signs of distress, problems could easily develop because of the high unbraced height.

Water Tanks

The 100,000-gallon water tank is an elevated steel tank with a timber roof. Much of the paint on the steel portion of the tank has failed, allowing extensive rusting to occur. This corrosive activity has eaten away a large hole in the web at the base of one of the four columns. This hole will continue to grow unless preventative measures are taken. Also, the timber roof appears to be damaged and in need of repair.

The 200,000-gallon tank is a steel standpipe type and also has failed paint and extensive rusting. This has contributed to some minor spalling of the concrete foundation wall.

Depot

The depot has undergone significant settlement, as indicated by the eave lines of the building not being level. Also, the exterior side walls are not plumb, indicating that the building does not have adequate resistance to lateral loads.

The cause of the settlement appears to be the lack of a proper foundation. Basically, the foundation consists of wood blocks that do not extend below frost depth. Because of this, the building is subject to movement of the soil caused by freeze-thaw cycles.

Recommendations

The failed timber column in the engine house should be replaced as soon as possible. The heel joints of all of the trusses should be strengthened and sealer applied to all of the timbers.

Further investigation is necessary to determine the condition of the framing members in the National Bank of Thurmond and Mankin-Cox buildings. This could be accomplished as part of the historic structures report.

The walls of the Goodman-Kincaid building should be checked periodically for any signs of movement. If movement does occur, it may be necessary to install a bracing system.

The water tanks should be blasted clean, and all severely corroded areas repaired. The timber roof of the 100,000-gallon tank should also be repaired. After the repairs are accomplished, the tanks should be protected with an appropriate paint system.

A new concrete foundation should be installed to support the depot, and it should extend below frost depth. New shear walls should also be installed to give the building resistance to lateral loads and to help keep the exterior walls plumb.

All of the structures should be surveyed for the presence of hazardous materials. If hazardous materials are found, appropriate steps can be taken to mitigate the problem.

PRELIMINARY PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT (July 1988)

A public meeting to discuss issues and concerns about Thurmond with interested citizens was held at 6:30 PM at the Thurmond Union Church on July 13, 1988. Approximately 50 individuals attended the meeting. Concerns brought up during discussions about the future of the Thurmond area were:

River Access

Will commercial outfitters be able to use the same access as individuals?

Access for fishing, canoes, kayaks, "4-wheel" river access areas, and handicap use is needed.

Thurmond

Protect the depot for visitors and a museum.

The engine house should be saved.

A parking area should be provided for visitors.

Commercial uses should occur in historic buildings.

Limit access to the residential area.

Route 25 to/from Glen Jean should be improved.

The rail spur on Dunloup Creek should be developed for access.

A bicycle path on the railroad spur to Glen Jean should be developed.

More hiking trails should be developed.

Sanitation facilities should be improved in Thurmond.

Weight limits/bus use and access on existing bridge into Thurmond are concerns.

What about existing and future camping?

Possible river access could be at the site of Erskine.

McKendree Road could be improved for access.

OAK HILL MEETING (November 1988)

This public meeting was held at the Holiday Inn in Oak Hill on November 30, 1988 at 7:00 PM to discuss preliminary DCP alternatives. Approximately 25 area residents attended the meeting and participated in discussions after the presentation.

Summary of comments:

Maintain traditional access patterns – to fishing and hiking areas.

Continue to improve access to the river.

Protect sensitive areas like the Kates Branch wetlands.

Consider access to different parts of the park for handicapped visitors.

Do not consider the idea of a "parkway" that goes all the way from I-64 to I-77.

Locate the visitor center at the site of key activities.

Keep the visitor center away from special areas.

Pay more attention to camping.

THURMOND MEETING (February 1989)

A meeting was held at Mayor John Bullock's house in Thurmond on February 9, 1989 at 7:00 PM to brief town officials on the status of the project work for Thurmond, to discuss preliminary alternatives and objectives, and to

receive input and comments. Approximately 10 residents attended the meeting.

Summary of comments:

Want to maintain access to upper town.

Safety is a concern because of train speed and chemicals being transported through town.

Need improvements to water and sewer systems.

Possible employment opportunities for Thurmond residents.

When will the NPS acquire commercial and railroad property?

Unlawful activities occur along river.

What will happen to the post office?

THURMOND MEETING (August 1989)

A meeting with town officials were held at the Banker's Club in Thurmond August 29, 1989 at 7 PM to present alternatives for NPS activities in the town. These alternatives were presented in the draft DCP/IP/EA. This meeting was held at the request of town officials to present them with the approved alternatives. Seventeen local residents and regional and county officials attended the meeting.

Summary of comments:

What happens if the NPS is not able to acquire the depot or engine house? Will the buildings be protected?

Residents would like the NPS to assist them in efforts to slow the speed of trains through town.

How will the NPS regulate local traffic (both residents and guests) into town?

How will the NPS address security in the town?

No additional suggestions beyond those discussed in the alternatives for uses of the town's commercial structures were received from the attendees.

PUBLIC REVIEW (November and December 1989)

The draft Development Concept Plan/Interpretive Prospectus/Environmental Assessment was on public review from November 30 to December 31, 1989. Copies of the draft document were distributed to the public, media, local government, and state and federal agencies inviting comments on the alternatives presented for resource protection and visitor use in Thurmond.

A total of 23 written comments were received - three from federal agencies, two from state agencies, one from local government, and 17 from individuals, local businesses, and organizations.

Comments ranged from reducing the amount of development to supporting the kind of development and preservation actions proposed in alternatives B and C. A couple of suggestions included combining parts of alternative B with alternative C. Of those stating a preference, eight supported alternative C (the preferred alternative). Two preferences were expressed for either B or C and one each for B and A. Specific concerns about the addition of fences and gates were stated by five of those commenting. These concerns ranged from the addition of a non-historic feature to the town to the possible limitation of access to residents and others wishing to travel to Beury Mountain.

Additional concerns included:

assuring public access at Dun Glen (base camp), especially non-commercial use

providing adequate utilities for new development

relationship of utilities to the town of Thurmond residents

interest in interpretation of whitewater rafting

concerns about the effects of secondary development in and adjacent to Thurmond

[Note - protective fencing is a safety necessity. It will keep park visitors away from the dangers of active railroad lines. Modifications to locations and designs of fencing and gates has occurred in the final plan as a result of public, state, and CSX comments on the draft plan. Specific design, locations, and operational requirements will be determined in more detailed phases of design work in consultation with the West Virginia Department of Highways, the West Virginia Division of Culture and History (State Historic Preservation Office), and CSX Corporation.]

APPENDIX D

ECONOMIC FEASIBILITY STUDY
THURMOND COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS
NEW RIVER GORGE NATIONAL RIVER
WEST VIRGINIA
SEPTEMBER 1991
PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT DIVISION
CONCESSIONS BRANCH

PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

The Denver Service Center (DSC) Eastern Team requested the DSC Concessions Branch to perform an economic feasibility study on the three commercial buildings recently acquired as part of the New River Gorge National River.

The recommended use for the buildings will be the same as before the National Park Service (NPS) acquired them - a hotel, a restaurant, and a retail shop.

The C & O Railroad used Thurmond as a marshalling yard for the many coal shipments leaving this area of West Virginia. In fact, it is reported that more freight originated in Thurmond than in Cincinnati. When the coal mines ceased to operate and demand for coal was reduced to a trickle, Thurmond lost its economic base. Residents left, and the few remaining families are mostly retirees. Economic revitalization to some extent is necessary if the town is to survive at all.

During its heyday, Thurmond and the surrounding area supported businesses such as a bank, medical offices, a drug store, rental housing, a Western Union office, a jewelry store, a grocery store, a furniture store, and a shoe repair shop. Dr. Lemon, the resident physician, built the bank building which also housed a drugstore operated by his wife, a pharmacist.

Drift mines were located 30 miles up and down the river. They mined low-seam coal which was usually 29 inches deep or less, which required the miner to work on his side or stomach. As one local resident put it, "When you reached 36 inches, you'd be so happy you would get up and run."

Fifty or more years ago, West Virginia was known as being rough and tough. One story tells of a poker game at the Dun Glen Hotel that lasted over 14 years without stopping. Players came in on the passenger trains from all points, especially Cincinnati, and would wait until a chair became vacant to enter the game.

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

West Virginia is making a great effort to attract tourism and thus encourage development that would create jobs for its citizens, according to Ms. Kelly Stewart of the Southern West Virginia Tourism and Convention Bureau. Enthusiasm for the Thurmond project is high. It is hoped that the project will increase tourism to the area, which already has a number of popular sites. There is a ski resort called Winterplace between Princeton and Beckley; the Bramwell Historic District; Pence Springs near Hinton; the Organ and Last World caves at Lewisburg; and the Youth Museum in Beckley. The Youth Museum members built the Mountain Homestead and other displays that change every six weeks. Nearby are the Exhibition Coal Mine, the Coal House, and Pipestem State Park. The

Greenbrier Hotel is one hour away, and the Snowshoe Ski Resort is three hours away. Civil War reenactments are performed at Lewisburg and at Carnifex Ferry Battlefield State Park.

Everyone interviewed in West Virginia was enthusiastic over the New River Gorge National River development thus far and its potential to bring more visitors to the area, which would be helpful to the economics of the state. Ms. Stewart stated that the Exhibition Coal Mine in Beckley had 30,000 visitors in 1989 and 53,000 in 1990. In June 1991, 8,300 people visited the mine. During 1990, 151,197 visitors arrived in the Beckley area on motor coaches (buses). The West Virginia Belle, a stern-wheeler based in Charleston, has become a attraction for both in- and out-of-state visitors. With the completion of Interstate 77, travelers need only take a side trip of 10 miles to reach the New River Gorge. Visitation is expected to increase in the coming years and more people are expected to make this area a destination point in their trips south in the fall and north in the spring.

If there was a single attraction to which citizens attributed the increased visitation, it was the New River Gorge bridge. They say many people come to the area just to see it.

THURMOND

The Bankers Club, a Thurmond hotel, operated until a short time before acquisition by the NPS. The last operator and owner, Mrs. Jackie Pugh, was unavailable for an interview. She could add a great deal of history, particularly the economics of commercial buildings operations, and could make projections of future operations somewhat more authoritative. An attempt will be made to contact her in the future. It is understood, however, that her clientele for overnight lodging were made up mostly of rafters who enjoyed stopping over for a warm shower, a good meal, and a night's sleep. While room rates are unknown, all agreed that the food served in the dining room was excellent.

The present condition of the three commercial buildings can only be classified as "from bad to worse." No real planning can be done before historic structures reports have been completed. If the decision is made to proceed with the rehabilitation of these buildings, it is recommended that the interior of the buildings be removed, with the possible exception of the bank lobby. In order to have enough lodging to allow for the greatest possible chance of success, all three buildings must devote upper floors to overnight accommodations. Access to each building from other buildings should be accomplished even though they are considered historic.

In order to make all floors handicap accessible, the square footage necessary to install an elevator will be lost per floor. For the purpose of this exercise, 48 square feet per floor will be used. First floors in each building could be used as follows:

BUILDING	OPERATION	SQUARE FEET
MANKIN-COX	GIFT SHOP	1,782
GOODMAN-KINCAID	RESTAURANT	3,825
NATIONAL BANK	LOBBY	2,148 - 48 = 2,100
TOTAL COMMERCIAL SPACE		**7,707 PLUS ELEVATOR**

Upper floors devoted to overnight accommodations will appear:

MANKIN-COX	SECOND FLOOR	6 ROOMS
	THIRD FLOOR	6 ROOMS
GOODMAN-KINCAID	SECOND FLOOR	11 ROOMS
	THIRD FLOOR	11 ROOMS
NATIONAL BANK	SECOND FLOOR	6 ROOMS
	THIRD FLOOR	7 ROOMS
	FOURTH FLOOR	7 ROOMS
TOTAL ROOMS		**54 ROOMS**

The above allows a minimum of 252 sq. ft. per room, including bath. Many rooms will be larger. There is ample room left for hallways and hopper rooms. Each room will have a private bath.

The cost of gutting the interiors and rebuilding floors, partitions, ceilings, bathrooms with fixtures, etc. is estimated at $180 per square foot. A quick estimate for the construction, rooms of furniture, and furniture, fixtures, and equipment (FF&E) for the rest of the commercial buildings follows:

CONSTRUCTION	26,069 square feet at $180	$4,692,420
ROOMS FURNITURE	54 rooms at $5,000	270,000
FF&E, RESTAURANT, KITCHEN, GIFT SHOP		903,240
TOTAL ESTIMATED COST*		**$5,865,660**

* No allowance has been made for lobby furniture and fixtures in this figure. No estimate can be made until it is determined whether or not the present bank lobby will be retained.

Because of the apparent risk of this proposed development, it is assumed that all of the above costs, with the possible exception of the hotel room furniture, will be borne by the NPS. As pro formas are developed, it will become clear whether concessioner will be able to afford the room furniture investment.

An amount of $699,300 is included in the FF&E figure to insure that enough money is available for special treatments in the kitchen such as using fireproof materials, fire suppression systems, clay tile flooring, soapstone walls, enameled metal ceiling tiles, adequate exhaust and make-up air systems, built-in, walk-in refrigerators and freezers, and for special wall treatment and general decor in the dining room and gift shop. This amount could also allow for the purchase and installation of a computer that would handle all hotel bookkeeping and guest folios, including reservations. CRTs at all point-of-sale locations would also be included. In addition to the efficiency the computer would lend this operation, it would eliminate the need for a night auditor, which is the most difficult position to fill in a hotel.

The season considered to be most desirable for the operation of this concession is April 1 through October 31. After more investigation and review, November may also be considered as part of the operating season, but for now, a seven-month (30-week) season will be used for projections. A Table of Organization using industry standards and wages follows.

No provision has been made for the transportation needed to bring visitors from the parking lot across the river to the hotel. If this is to be concessioner operated and only overnight guests and their luggage are concerned, one van that can handle eight people and their luggage would be ample, and would cost about $25,000. If the van must be handicap accessible, it would cost about $45,000. The van could be driven by a maintenance person or anyone free at the time, so a driver was not listed in the Table of Organization. This, of course, assumes that the van will be "on call" and not operating under a schedule.

This entire report was based on the following assumptions:

a. The NPS will assume all construction costs.

b. The NPS will provide all roads, parking lots, and utilities, including electric power, water, telephone system, and sewage disposal.

c. The engine house (roundhouse) will be acquired by the NPS, rehabilitated, and will contain exhibits interesting enough to cause visitors to want to come to Thurmond and possibly stay the night. The recently acquired depot should also help to entice visitors to the area.

d. The concessioner will be responsible for all normal maintenance. The NPS will be responsible for all major maintenance and capital improvements such as a new roof or correction of structural defects. The Statement of Requirements (SOR) should contain language that would allow all maintenance issues and franchise fees to be reopened for negotiations after the first two years and every five years after that.

e. The concessioner should be encouraged to join and become an active member of groups that are concerned with increasing visitation to this area.

f. The basement of the buildings will be reworked to allow for a laundry, a housekeeping office and storage, and perhaps offices for the concessioner, where it is not possible to have these offices on the first floor. The two other structures on this property could be used for these purposes provided they are made structurally sound.

As soon as a decision is made to proceed with this development, the preparation of an SOR should be started. It will require approximately a year for writing the SOR, advertising for bids, paneling of such bids, and awarding a contract.

TABLE OF ORGANIZATION

Position	Number of Employees	Salary or Hourly Wage	Weekly Payroll	Yearly Payroll
General Manager	1	$500/week	$500	$15,000
Food Manager	1	$350/week	$350	$10,500
Gifts Manager	1	$350/week	$350	$10,500
Maintenance Chief	1	$350/week	$350	$10,500
Desk Clerks	4.2	$6.00/Hour	$1,008	$30,240
Head Housekeeper	1	$7.00/Hour	$280	$8,400
Maids*	5	$4.50/Hour	$900	$27,000
Laundry	2	$4.50/Hour	$360	$10,800
Maintenance Men	2.8	$6.00/Hour	$672	$20,160
Gift Shop Clerks	4.2	$6.00/Hour	$1,008	$30,240
Food Host & Cashiers	2.8	$6.00/Hour	$672	$20,160
Table Service	8.75	$4.50/Hour	$1,575	$47,250
Bus Boys	2.8	$4.50/Hour	$504	$15,120
Chef	1	$300/week	$300	$9,000
Cooks	5.6	$6.00/Hour	$1,344	$40,320
Pantry People	2.8	$5.50/Hour	$616	$18,480
Dishwasher	2.8	$4.50/Hour	$504	$15,120
Total	**49.75**		**$11,293**	**$338,790**
Tax & Fringe			$2,259	$67,758
Total Payroll			**$13,552**	**$406,548**

*Maids will also clean the lobby.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

The pro forma which follows is fairly accurate provided the assumptions listed above and following the pro forma are reasonably correct. On this basis and if the concessioner is an experienced and astute operator, the development will be economically feasible starting in the second or third year of operation.

THURMOND COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS PROJECTION
NEW RIVER GORGE NATIONAL RIVER, WEST VIRGINIA

Sales		
Rooms	$339,066	21.33%
Food	550,436	34.63%
Gifts	700,000	44.04%
Total Sales	$1,589,502	100.00%
Cost of Goods Sold		
Food	176,140	32.00%
Gifts	385,000	55.00%
Total Cost of Goods Sold	$561,140	35.30%
Payroll		
Direct Payroll	338,790	21.31%
Tax & Fringe	67,758	4.26%
Total Payroll	$406,548	25.58%
Controllable Expense	$174,845	11.00%
Noncontrollable Expense		
Depreciation	38,571	2.43%
Interest (average)	16,888	1.06%
Management Fee	63,580	4.00%
Administrative & General	79,475	5.00%
Insurance	35,000	2.20%
Franchise Fee	95,370	6.00%
Total Noncontrollable	$328,884	20.69%
Profit before Federal Tax	$118,085	7.43%
Cash Flow	$156,656	
Annual Principal Payment	$38,572	

ASSUMPTIONS USED IN PROJECTIONS FOR THURMOND

SALES

Rooms: $40 single, $8 each additional person, 1.75 people per room.
54 rooms x 210 days x 65% occupancy x $40 + .75 x rooms sold x 8.

Total Room Sales: $339,066

Food: Breakfast - 54 x 210 x .65 x 1.75 x $3.60 = $46,436
Lunch (2 turns) - 120 x 210 x 2 x $5.00 = $252,000
Dinner (1 turn) - 120 x 210 x $10.00 = $252,000

Total Food Sales: $550,436

Gifts: 350,000 visitors at $2 each = $700,000 (This number is not a visitor projection, but is included here for averaging possible sales.)

TOTAL ALL SALES: $1,589,502

Interest is based on the concessioner investing $270,000 for the purchase of room furnishings. Assume the concessioner will borrow entire amount at 10% for seven years.

TOTAL INTEREST PAID: $118,217 or $16,888 average per year

TOTAL PRINCIPAL PAID: $270,000 or $38,572 average per year

Although the concessioner will be expected to purchase all linens and other small goods, it is anticipated this will be accomplished with existing funds, not requiring additional loans.

CONCLUSIONS

This development and this report should be refined as new information becomes available. When all concerned are reasonably comfortable with the conclusions as presented here, the planning for construction and operation should begin. On this basis and provided the concessioner is an experienced and astute operator, the development this report is devoted to will be economically feasible probably starting in the second or third year of operation.

This report should be updated to reflect changes as they are agreed upon.

APPENDIX E — CULTURAL RESOURCE COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENTS

This list of actions delineates: (1) "programmatic exclusions" that are not likely to have adverse effects on cultural resources that may be implemented without further SHPO and ACHP review, (2) actions not excluded but agreed to not require further review, and (3) actions not excluded but requiring review by SHPO and ACHP during design stages.

PROGRAMMATIC EXCLUSION

Historical, archeological, and architectural investigations to document structures and grounds (d)

Upgrading existing pedestrian walkways (f)

Health and safety activities such as removal of asbestos, lead paint, and buried tanks (j) - depot, engine house, water tank, and commercial buildings parcels

Installation of fire detection and suppression systems, security alarm systems and upgrading of HVAC systems (k) - part of all building rehab

Erection of signs and wayside exhibits (l)

ACTIONS NOT REQUIRING FURTHER REVIEW

Rehabilitation of existing non-historic structures at Dun Glen

Improvements to trails outside the National Register District

ACTIONS REQUIRING FURTHER REVIEW

Construction of parking area, comfort station/shelter, walkways, road realignments, and utility systems modification/new construction outside the National Register district and at Southside Junction. Most of the area is not within view of historic district.

Modifications to historic fabric of remains of the Dun Glen Hotel at Dun Glen

Addition of pedestrian walkway to the New River Bridge

Preservation/rehabilitation action on historic buildings and adjacent grounds within the National Register district:

Depot
Engine House, railyard, and yard buildings
Water tanks and post office
Commercial Buildings and adjacent houses
Historic houses within the town if acquired by the NPS

Addition of fences, walkways and other landscape features

Construction of pedestrian tunnel beneath railroad tracks

Improvements to Route 25 - Glen Jean to Thurmond to Stone Cliff - including road realignments and bridge replacements

Restoration of historic rolling stock

United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
Mid-Atlantic Region
143 South Third Street
Philadelphia, PA 19106

IN REPLY REFER TO:

D18(MAR-CRM)

MAY 0 8 1992

Robert D. Bush
Executive Director
Advisory Council on Historic Preservation
Old Post Office Building
1100 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, #809
Washington, D.C. 20004

Dear Dr. Bush:

The National Park Service (NPS) is preparing a Development Concept Plan/Interpretive Prospectus (DCP/IP) for Thurmond, Fayette County, West Virginia, a unit of New River Gorge National River. The plan addresses issues not covered in the Park's 1982 General Management Plan (GMP), and it will affect the Thurmond Historic District, a property listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

On December 5, 1989, we submitted a copy of the draft plan dated October 1989 to the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO), for individual review in accordance with 36 CFR Part 800.4, per Stipulation 6 (c) of the Programmatic Memorandum of Agreement of September 11, 1981, on the development or revision of NPS planning documents. The Deputy SHPO replied on January 2, 1990 (copy enclosed). At that point the compliance process slowed while additional site analysis was undertaken, and no consultation was initiated with the Council, although consultation continued with the SHPO. On November 5, 1990, Regional Historian Clifford Tobias informed Ms. Martha Catlin of your staff of the project status. By that time the Programmatic Agreement (PA) of August 15, 1990 was in effect.

Although we realize that the Council has not previously been involved in the Thurmond planning project, we believe that the most expeditious procedure would be to complete the compliance process under Stipulation E of the PA, and that is how consultation has been proceeding with the SHPO. Accordingly, we now transmit for your review the final DCP/IP, dated April 1992. As a result of public and agency review, and additional site analysis, the Preferred Alternative ("C" -- the Town's Evolution), in the 1989 draft, has been selected as the final plan, with some adjustments.

We have requested that the SHPO give special attention to the list of actions outlined in Appendix E (pages 83-84), and concur with our determination of "programmatic exclusions," under Stipulation

C of the PA. We would appreciate receiving your comments within thirty (30) calendar days. Should you need more time or have questions concerning the plan or the review procedure under the PA, please contact Team Captain Linda Romola of the Denver Service Center at FTS 327-2413. Please address your comments to this office (attn: Clifford Tobias). We encourage your staff to coordinate the review procedure with Ms. Susan Pierce of the SHPO staff. Your cooperation in concluding the compliance process for the Thurmond DCP/IP will be greatly appreciated. Of course consultation will continue with the Council as individual undertakings at Thurmond are implemented.

Sincerely,

/s/Anthony M. Corbisiero

Charles P. Clapper, Jr.
Acting Regional Director
Mid-Atlantic Region

Enclosures

bcc:
Supt, NERI
Mgr., Eastern Team, DSC (attn: L. Romola)
L. Feller, WASO 418

United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
Mid-Atlantic Region
143 South Third Street
Philadelphia, PA 19106

IN REPLY REFER TO:

D18 (MAR-CRM)

MAY 0 8 1992

William H. Drennen, Jr.
State Historic Preservation Officer
Division of Culture and History
The Cultural Center
Capitol Complex
Charleston, West Virginia 25305

Dear Mr. Drennen:

As you know, the National Park Service is preparing a Development Concept Plan/Interpretive Prospectus (DCP/IP) for Thurmond, Fayette County, New River Gorge National River. Mr. William G. Farrar, your Deputy, and Ms. Susan Pierce of your staff have been involved in the planning process for this project, which will affect the Thurmond Historic District, a property listed on the National Register of Historic Places. On January 2, 1990, Mr. Farrar provided comments on the draft DCP/IP/Environmental Assessment dated October 1989 (see enclosed copy of letter).

We now transmit for your review under Stipulation E of the Programmatic Agreement (PA) of August 15, 1990, the final DCP/IP, dated April 1992. As a result of public and agency review, including your office's comments, and additional site analysis, the Preferred Alternative ("C" -- the Town's Evolution), in the 1989 draft, has been selected as the final plan. Some adjustments, such as the removal of traffic gates near the Depot, have been made to the Preferred Alternative.

As you review the final plan, it is especially important that you examine the list of actions outlined in Appendix E (pages 83-84), and that you concur with our determination of the "programmatic exclusions," under Stipulation C of the PA.

We would appreciate receiving your comments within thirty (30) calendar days. Should you need more time or have questions concerning the plan or the review procedure under the PA, please contact Team Captain Linda Romola of the Denver Service Center at (303) 969-2413. Please address your comments to this office (attn: Clifford Tobias).

We are simultaneously transmitting a copy of the final DCP/IP to the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation. We encourage your staff to coordinate the review process with Ms. Martha Catlin of

the Council staff. We very much appreciate the cooperation and assistance that your office has provided, and look forward to continuing this relationship in the future.

Sincerely,

/s/Anthony M. Colosero

Charles P. Clapper, Jr.
Acting Regional Director
Mid-Atlantic Region

Enclosures

bcc:
Supt, NERI
Mgr., Eastern Team, DSC (attn: L. Romola)
L. Feller, WASO 418 w/cy incoming

WEST VIRGINIA DIVISION OF
CULTURE AND HISTORY

July 14, 1992

MID-ATLANTIC REGION Rcd RD's Office JUL 2 0 1992	Initials and Date
Director	
✓ Deputy Director	
EEO	
Public Affairs	
Mgmt & Opns	
✓ CRM	C Tobias 7/21
Plng & Develop	
Administration	

Charles P. Clapper, Jr.
Acting Regional Director
Mid Atlantic Region
National Park Service
143 S. Third Street
Philadelphia, PA 19106

Attention: Clifford Tobias

RE: Thurmond Development Concept Plan
FR#: 90-239-FA

Dear Mr. Clapper,

We have received for review the Development Concept Plan for Thurmond and have reviewed it as required by Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, and its implementing regulations, 36 CFR 800, "The Protection of Historic Properties." Thank you for the extension of time and for the cooperation of Team Captain Linda Romola.

On the whole it appears to be a sound plan. However, there are a few items that we would like to mention. First, it appears that the DCP has avoided chosing a specific period of significance. On page 21, the plan states that "no attempt will be made to restore the town to a specific period." But on page 53, recommendations for historic furnishings indicate that the preferred period is 1920-1940. On page 35 discussion regarding use of interiors for commercial purposes indicates that the target period is the 1920s. This is a slight contradication. We would recommend that the DCP be consistent when implemented.

My staff checked the National Register nomination for any indication of a specific period of reference. Specific dates of the Statement of Significance are given as 1884 - 1950: these dates cover the entire length of time of activity in Thurmond. The Statement of Significance indicates that buildings were constructed primarily between 1900-1906. The C & O Railroad entered the area in 1888-1889. Is 1920 an appropriate date to pick? Is it appropriate to leave the period of significance open? At this time we do not have a specific recommendation to give, but it is an issue that should be addressed further prior to interpretation.

THE CULTURAL CENTER • CAPITOL COMPLEX • CHARLESTON, WEST VIRGINIA 25305 • 304-348-0220
FAX 304-348-2779 • TDD 304-348-0220

On page 76, the DCP indicates that interiors may be completely removed and replaced; implying that there may be few remaining intact interiors. According to Appendix E, we will have the right to comment on any removal of interior fabric. At this time, we are not comfortable with the blanket statement regarding removal, but given the opportunity to comment, we will accept this statement conditionally.

Regarding Appendix E, the proposed treatment of potential archaeological resources is not clear. At this time, there is insufficient evidence that the construction of the proposed parking area and adjoining structure/ground disturbance will not affect archaeological resources at Southside Junction. Eric Voigt of my staff has visited the site and discussed additional survey work with NPS staff. At this time, we cannot clear the first item under Actions Not Requiring Further Review until the programmatic exclusion of archaeological investigation is completed. We cannot make a decision to eliminate the Southside Junction from our review until the survey work is completed.

This is our only major concern with Appendix E. Further review is needed for almost all other activities within the National Register district. This has been so indicated in the last section of Appendix E.

We appreciate the opportunity to be of service. If you have any questions, please contact Susan Pierce, Director of Review and Compliance, or Eric Voigt, Staff Archaeologist.

Sincerely,

William G. Farrar, Deputy
State Historic Preservation Officer

WGF/SMP:ps

Advisory Council On Historic Preservation

The Old Post Office Building
1100 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, #809
Washington, DC 20004

AUG 3 1992

Mr. Charles P. Clapper, Jr.
Acting Regional Director
National Park Service
Mid-Atlantic Region
143 South Third Street
Philadelphia, PA 19106

REF: Development Concept Plan/ Interpretive Prospectus
New River Gorge National River
Thurmond, West Virginia

Dear Mr. Clapper:

Thank you for providing the Council with the referenced plan, pursuant to Stipulation E of the 1990 Nationwide Programmatic Agreement among the National Park Service, the National Conference of State Historic Preservation Officers and the Council. We concur with the comments of the West Virginia State Historic Preservation Officer in his letter of July 14, 1992. We look forward to reviewing the plan's component undertakings under the Council's regulations, 36 CFR Part 800, "Protection of Historic Properties" and Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.

If we may be of further assistance, please contact Martha Catlin at (202) 786-0505.

Sincerely,

John D. Klima
Director, Eastern Office
of Project Review

APPENDIX F

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT (FONSI)

for the

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT FOR

THURMOND DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT PLAN/INTERPRETIVE PROSPECTUS

NEW RIVER GORGE NATIONAL RIVER, WEST VIRGINIA

INTRODUCTION

The National Park Service (NPS) prepared an environmental assessment (EA) on a development concept plan/interpretive prospectus for part of the town of Thurmond to preserve, promote and interpret its role in the development of the railroad industry. The draft DCP/IP/EA considered three alternatives. It was distributed for public review on November 22, 1989.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES OF THE PROPOSAL

Historic buildings in the Thurmond railroad yard would be preserved, and commercial buildings in the town of Thurmond would be adaptively used. Because activities would not be tied to a specific historic period, the historic integrity and fabric of national register properties in the commercial area might be compromised. Any actions taken in these buildings will be preceded by appropriate consultation and compliance according to section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966.

Some development restrictions will be required to protect Thurmond's visual qualities and to prevent new construction that could diminish its historic integrity. Facilities at Southside Junction as well as automobiles and shuttle buses may be visible from Thurmond during parts of the year. Protective fencing in the railroad yard will be required to protect the visitor from the ongoing railroad operation. This will somewhat diminish the cultural landscape.

Archeological evaluations will be required before any ground-disturbing activities take place. An archeologist will be on site to monitor excavations.

Two historic structures are located within the 100-year floodplain on the east side of the New River. As the preferred alternative allows these buildings to remain in place and open to the public, a Statement of Findings will be prepared. Existing development at the Dun Glen area is located in the floodplain. This area will be unaffected. It will be used for park operations and visitor day use activities. This will also be discussed in the Statement of Findings.

CONCLUSION

The preferred alternative as described in the October 1989 Thurmond draft Development Concept Plan/Interpretive Prospectus/Environmental Assessment does not constitute a major federal action that will significantly affect the quality of the human environment as defined in section 102(2)(c) of

the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (Public Law 91-190, 83 Stat. 953). Therefore, the NPS will not prepare an Environmental Impact Statement.

Joseph W. Townsend

Regional Director
Mid-Atlantic Region

8/27/92.

Date

APPENDIX G

STATEMENT OF FINDINGS

NEW RIVER GORGE NATIONAL RIVER

THURMOND DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT PLAN/ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

RECOMMENDED: Joe L. Kennedy — 4/19/92
SUPERINTENDENT, NEW RIVER GORGE NATIONAL RIVER — DATE

CONCURRED: _____ — 4/3/92
REGIONAL DIRECTOR, MID-ATLANTIC REGION — DATE

APPROVED: _____ — 6/16/92
DIRECTOR, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE — DATE

INTRODUCTION

New River Gorge National River is located in southeastern West Virginia. It was established to conserve and interpret outstanding natural, scenic, and historic values and objects in and around the New River Gorge.

The town of Thurmond is located within the New River Gorge National River. The Thurmond Historic District was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in January 1984 and listed at the level of state significance. The historic buildings located within the 100-year floodplain are the foundations of the engine house and some storage buildings. The area identified in the draft DCP/IP/EA as Southside Junction and now known as Dun Glen is also located within the 100-year floodplain. Most of the actions in that area are exempted from compliance with Executive Order 11988 (Floodplain Management). However, the existing structures constructed by the previous landowner will be used as equipment storage and office space by the river patrol operation of the National Park Service. There are no known non-riparian wetlands within the project area; however, there may be riparian wetlands associated with the New River.

The National Park Service is in the process of adopting a Development Concept Plan and Interpretive Prospectus for the Thurmond site which includes activities and developments on the opposite side of the river. The preferred and three other alternatives are described in detail in the draft DCP/IP/EA. The preferred alternative does not highlight a particular period in Thurmond's history, but illustrates the significance of the town as part of the regional railroad network from 1873 to present day. The stories of the coal mining connection, the changes to the regional economy, and the effect of diesel trains on the railroad industry will also be told in order to place Thurmond in the larger context of the New River Gorge and the C&O Railroad.

Executive Order 11988 (Floodplain Management) requires the NPS and other Federal agencies to evaluate the likely impacts of actions in floodplains. The objective is to avoid to the extent possible the long- and short-term adverse impacts associated with occupancy, modification, or destruction of floodplains and to avoid indirect support of development and new construction in such areas wherever there is a practicable alternative. Executive Order 11990 (Protection of Wetlands), requires the National Park Service and other federal agencies to evaluate the likely impacts of actions in wetlands.

The purpose of this Statement of Findings is to present the rationale for locating proposed actions in the floodplain and to document the anticipated effects on floodplain and riparian wetland values.

WHY THE PROPOSED ACTION MUST BE LOCATED WITHIN THE FLOODPLAIN

In order to accurately interpret the history of Thurmond and provide a quality visitor experience, visitors must be allowed access to the engine house and railroad yard features within the 100-year floodplain. The engine house and storage buildings were constructed between 1905 and 1920. According to NPS Guidelines for implementing Executive Order 11988, as part of its mandate the National Park Service "preserves and interprets cultural resources and objects possessing historic, archeological, architectural, engineering and cultural significance. Actions affecting cultural resources included in or eligible for the national register are subject to the provision of section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, and the implementing regulations found in 36 CFR, Part 800, Protection of Historic Properties. In general, cultural resources located in floodplains will be managed to assure their in-place preservation."

Two of the four alternatives did not allow visitor access to the engine house and storage structures. It was concluded that this would greatly diminish the visitor's experience and opportunities for knowledge and understanding of the role Thurmond played in the development of New River Gorge and the railroad industry.

As stated in the draft DCP/IP/EA, according to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) the railroad tracks delineate the 100-year floodplain for the town of Thurmond. Everything on the east side of the tracks is outside the 100-year floodplain, while everything on the west side of the tracks, including the engine house and storage structures are within the 100-year floodplain. However, all these structures are at the same elevation as the buildings outside the floodplain.

The buildings located at Dun Glen that have been proposed for operations and storage were built in the 1970's and 1980's by the previous owner of the land. The National Park Service acquired this land in 1989. The buildings were flood-proofed when they were constructed. These buildings will primarily be used for river patrol operations and maintenance of this area of the park. River patrol and rescue operations and equipment for both activities must be located close to the river access for an easy and quick emergency response. Rafts, paddles, life vests and other river patrol and rescue equipment will be stored there. Interpretive rangers and maintenance staff stationed at the site will also have office space available.

As the proposal calls for visitor and park use of existing structures already located in the floodplain, no changes to the floodplain or riparian wetland habitat are expected. Therefore, floodplain and riparian wetland values will not be impacted. The land on which the engine house and its foundation lie was previously impacted in the early 1900's when it was developed as a railroad yard. The foundation of the engine house consists of wooden columns which are 16"x16". These are on top of wooden cribbing which, according to NPS engineers, is adequate; however, the cribbing is exposed in some places. Further flood-proofing of the foundation will be done to insure its stability. No heavy equipment at the river level will be used.

The area at Dun Glen has already been impacted. It was developed by the previous owner as a commercial river rafting staging area. The parking lot, trailhead, private and park launch ramps, and picnic area planned for that site are excepted actions under NPS Guidelines for implementing EO 11988.

The project site is not within a high hazard area.

CONCLUSION

The National Park Service concludes that there is no practicable alternative to locating visitors and park operations at Thurmond and Dun Glen within the 100-year floodplain. Under the proposal, no new floodplain or possible riparian wetlands will be occupied. Protection of cultural resources will be improved. The National Park Service finds the proposal to be acceptable under executive orders 11988 and 11990.

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Stewart Frazier - resident of Oak Hill, West Virginia, and former C&O Railroad employee

Photographs courtesy of the Historic American Engineering Record

As the nation's principal conservation agency, the Department of the Interior has responsibility for most of our nationally owned public lands and natural and cultural resources. This includes fostering wise use of our land and water resources, protecting our fish and wildlife, preserving the environmental and cultural values of our national parks and historical places, and providing for the enjoyment of life through outdoor recreation. The department assesses our energy and mineral resources and works to ensure that their development is in the best interests of all our people. The department also promotes the goals of the Take Pride in America campaign by encouraging stewardship and citizen responsibility for the public lands and promoting citizen participation in their care. The department also has a major responsibility for American Indian reservation communities and for people who live in island territories under U.S. administration.

Publication services were provided by Kathy Dimont, editor, and Lori Yokomizo, visual information specialist, of the Branch of Publications and Graphic Design, Denver Service Center.
NPS D-34A September 1992

United States Department of the Interior / National Park Service